



No. 80
AUG '01

ROBINSON
SNEJBJERG

STARMAN



dccomics.com

HARRIS
ROBINSON
2001

FROM THE SHADE'S JOURNAL...

Jack had helped his father become Starmen again in 1951. Then, seemingly trapped in the past, Jack's return to the present appeared in a most unusual form.

A Starmen from the future, the (adult) Thom Kallor who as a youth served as Star Boy in the Legion of Super-Heroes.

However, Jack has resolved that for the sake of his son, he will no longer be Starmen.

Now read on...

HERE WE ARE, JACK!

OPAL CITY. YOUR OPAL IN THE PRESENT.



ARRIVEDERCI,
BON VOYAGE,
GOODBYE

ROBINSON
writer

SNEJBURG
artist

OAKLEY
letterer

WRIGHT
colorist

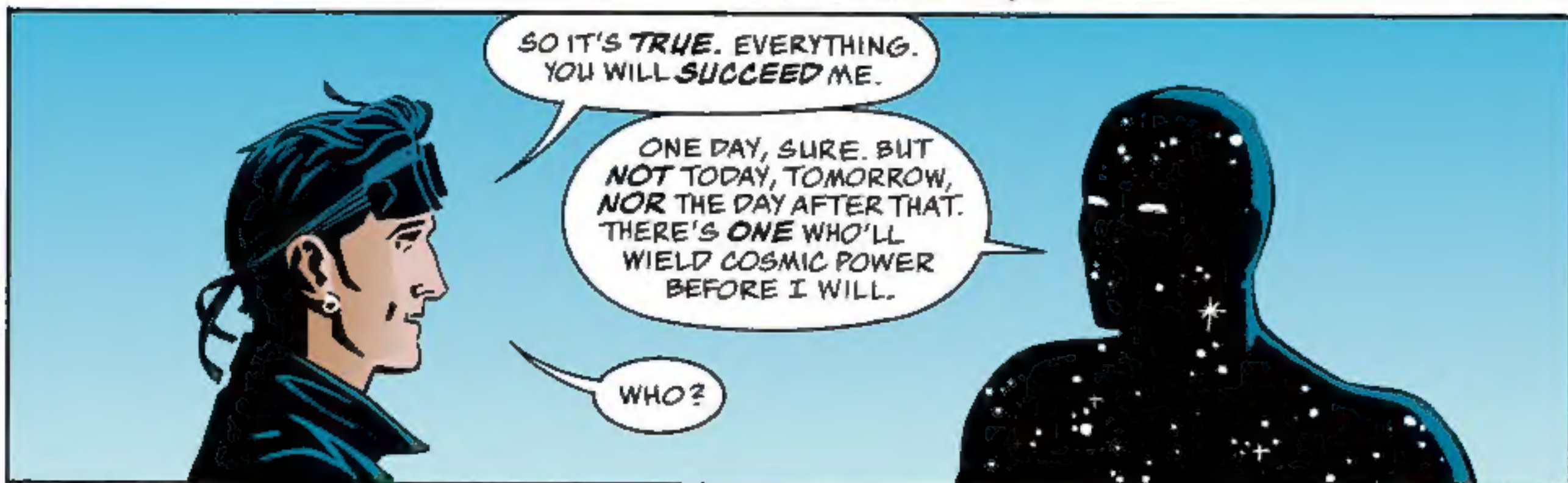
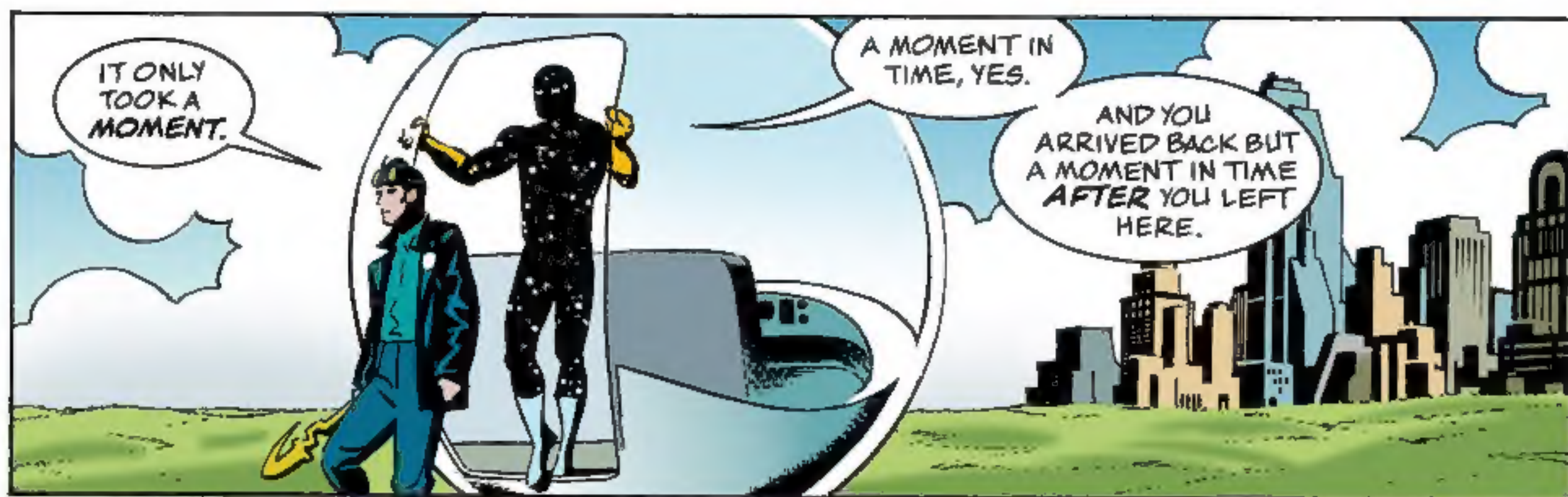
JAMISON
seps

WACKER
asst. ed.

TOMASI
editor

GOODWIN
guiding light

SPECIAL THANKS TO OLE COMOLL





AND YOU'RE THE REINCARNATION OF MATT O'DARE AND BRIAN SAVAGE?

H... HOLD ON. THAT'S A NEW ONE. I'M REINCAR-NATED?



FORGET IT.



BUT **EVERYTHING** WILL HAPPEN JUST LIKE THE SHADE SAID?

I'LL RETURN FROM THE 31ST CENTURY. YES. BUT **WHETHER** YOUR FUTURE LEADS TO ME, I CAN'T SAY. I'M ONLY **ONE** POSSIBLE FUTURE, AFTER ALL.

Huh?



THE FUTURE *ISN'T* A STRAIGHT ROUTE FROM THE PRESENT LIKE THE PRESENT IS TO THE *PAST*.

THE WAY AHEAD HAS MANY FORKS. **POTENTIAL** CHOICES. UNSUNG SONGS. UNSPOKEN VERSE. ALL **AWAITING** THE MOMENT WHEN "WHAT *MIGHT* BE" HAS BECOME "WHAT *IS*."

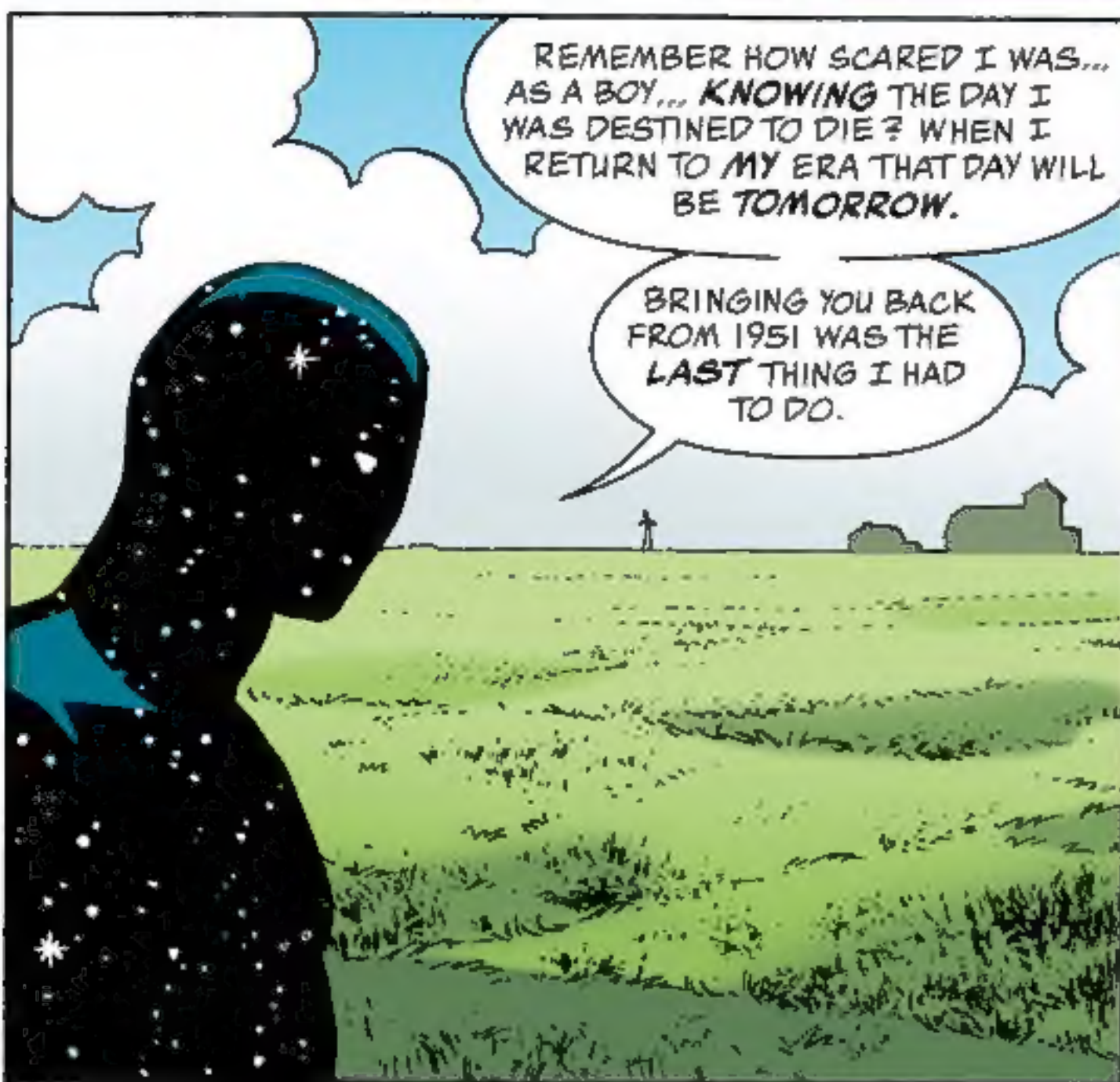
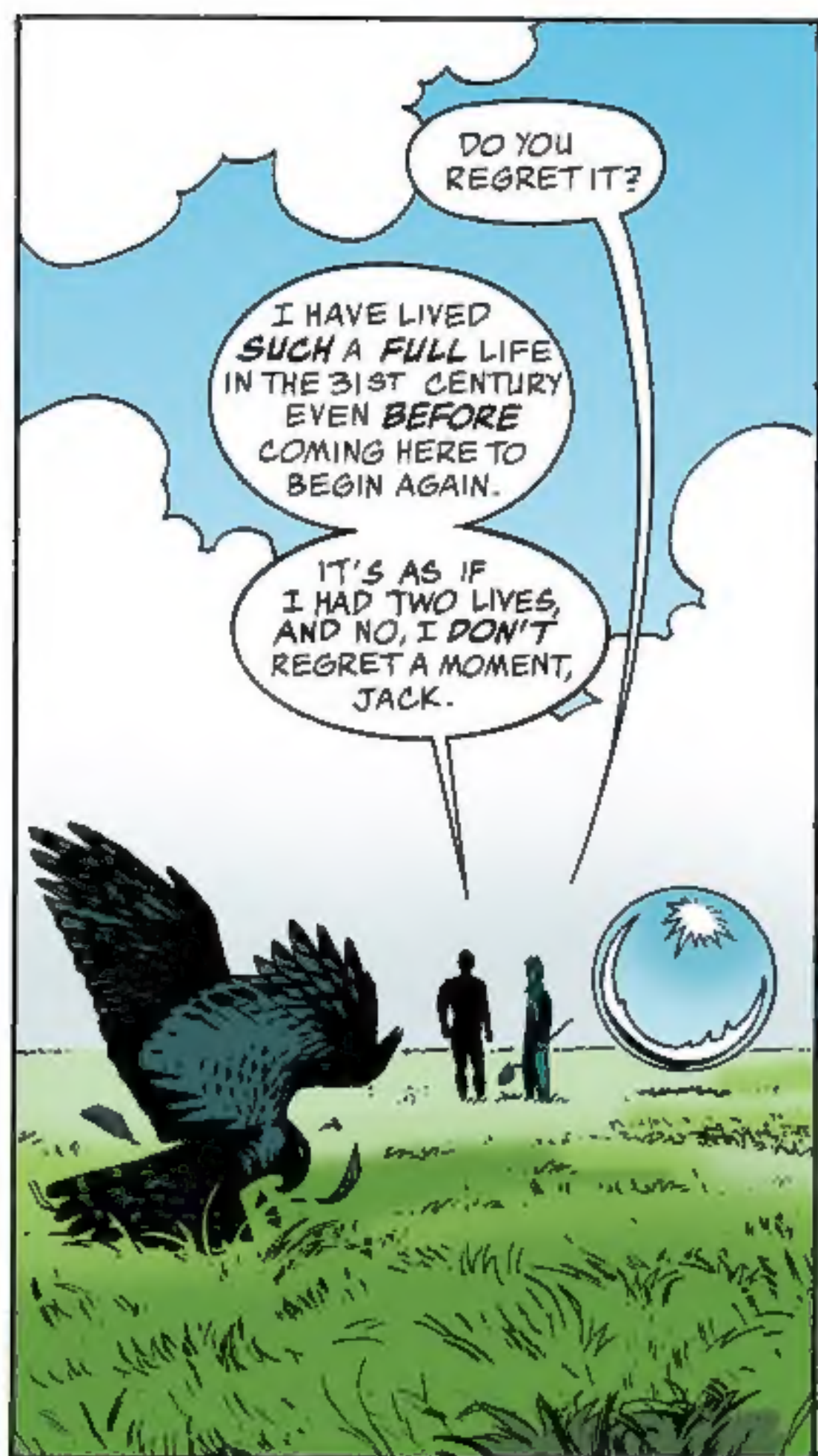


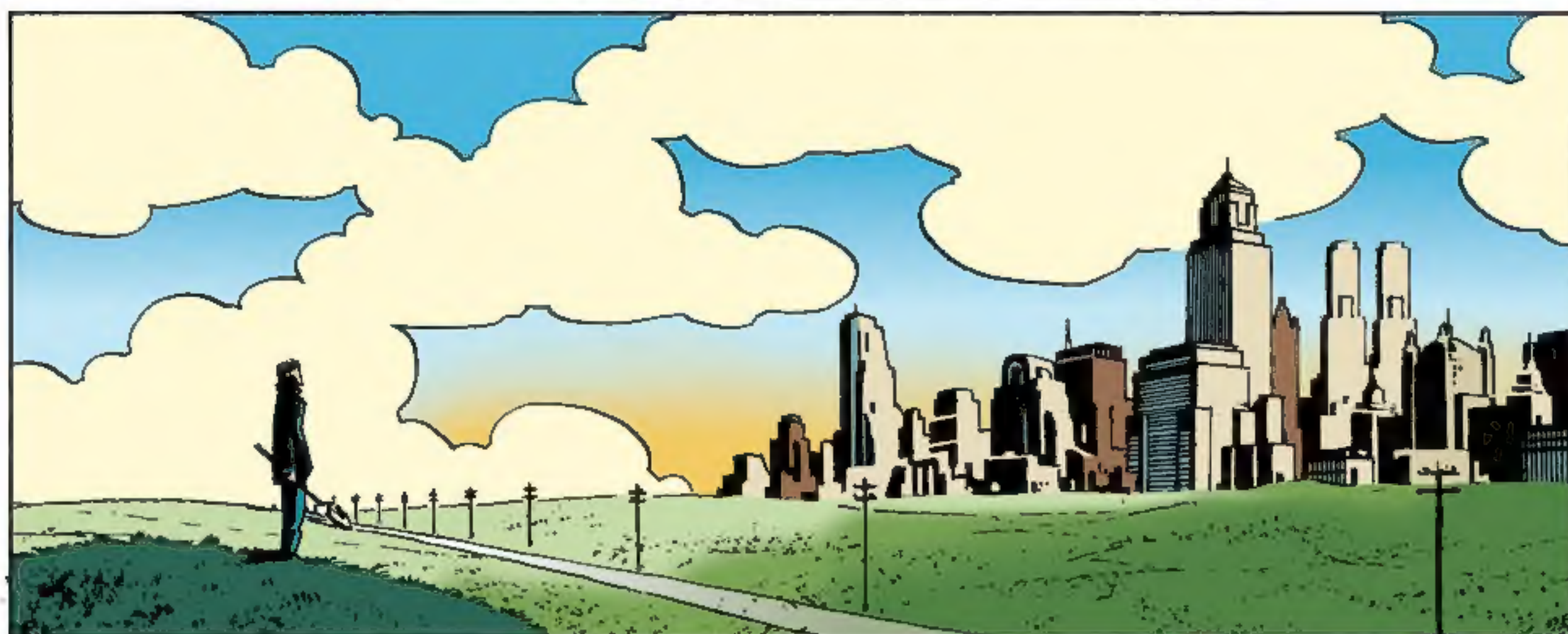
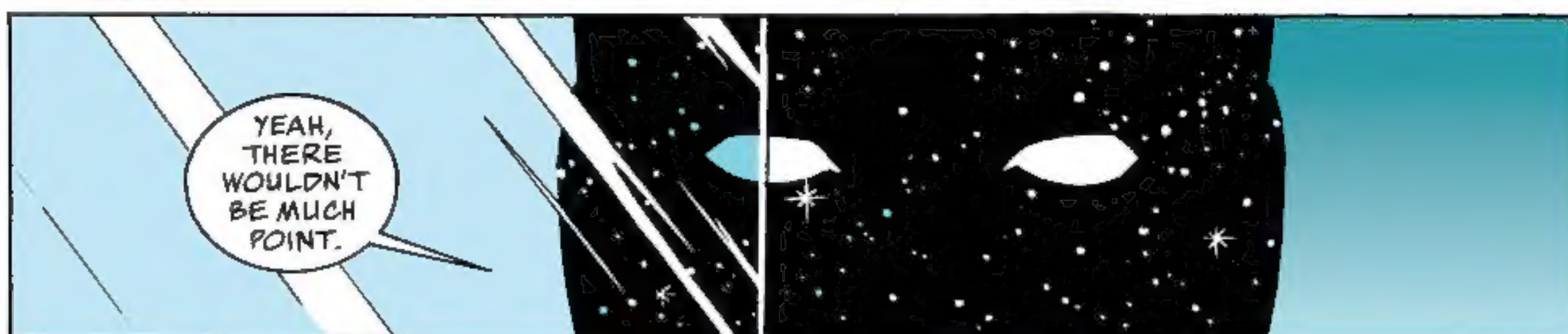
SO... YOU'RE SAYING... I'M NOT SURE **WHAT** YOU'RE SAYING.



FOR ALL I KNOW IN OTHER **POSSIBLE FUTURES**, THOM KALLOR **DIED** SERVING IN THE LEGION. OR HE TURNED **EVIL**. OR HE WAS SIMPLY **DIFFERENT** ENOUGH IN HIS PERSONALITY HE **DOESN'T** RETURN TO THE PAST AND BECOME STARMAN.

BUT IN THE FUTURE THAT'S **MINE**, I **DID**.







MY STORE IS NO MORE OR LESS THAN IT WAS THE MOMENT I LEFT IT. NO MORE, NO LESS.

EXCEPT...



...THE MAIL HAS ARRIVED.



Jack.

I'm scared to write. Scared you won't reply, and scared you will.

I'll get to the point - I didn't leave you because I feared a future with you. It wasn't because I no longer loved you. I will always love you.

The truth is I'm pregnant with your child. A girl.

I would face any future with you, Jack. Any danger. But after the very real danger we faced together, and the high cost you paid with the loss of your father, I came to the realization that I couldn't ask for our child to face those same risks.

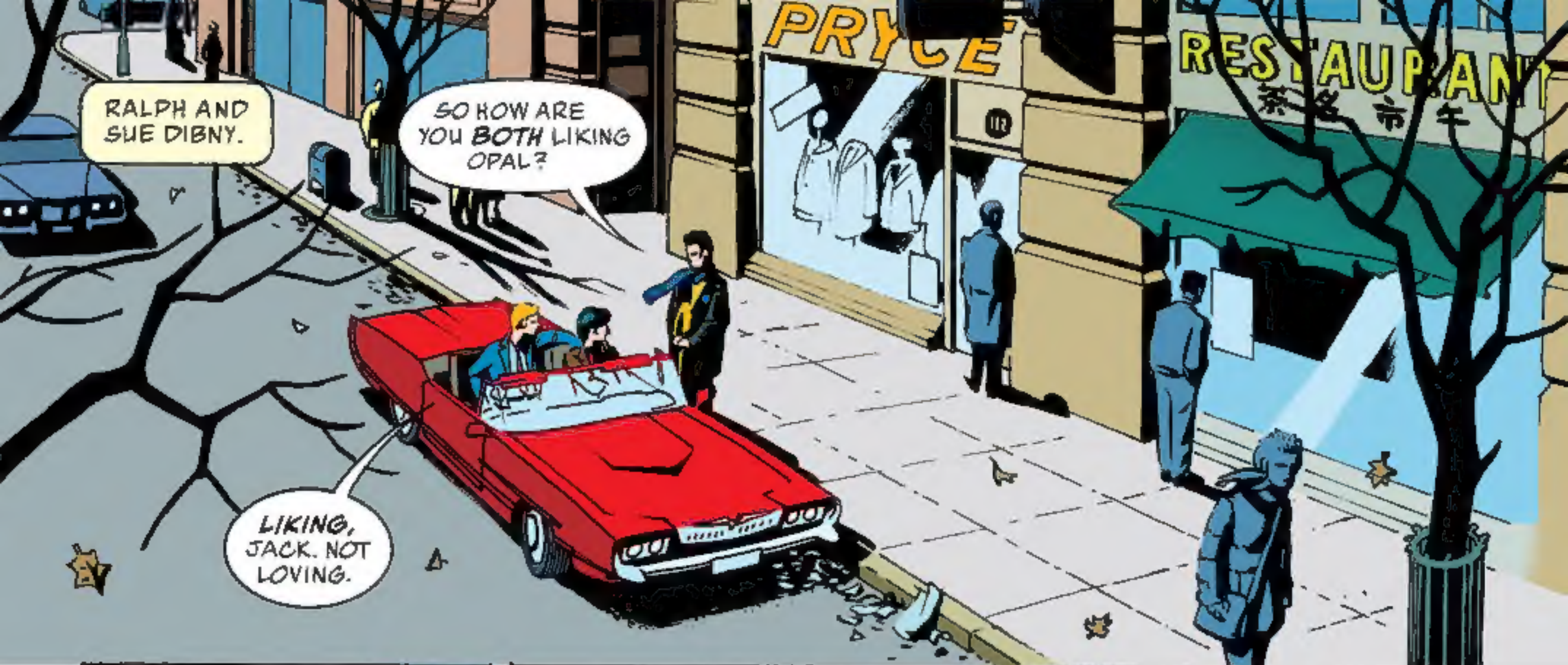
I live in San Francisco now. It's a real city, if you know what I mean. The superheroes and costumed villains who make their way to and from here don't leave their mark here in the way they do in Gotham, Keystone or Opal. I ask you - no, I beg you to join me. To choose between Starmen and a life with me.

This is no ultimatum on my feelings. I've said that I love you and I do. If you don't recenter my life, no one else will. I'll love you forever...

Join me, join me, please, please, please join me..

Sadie





RALPH AND
SUE DIBNY.

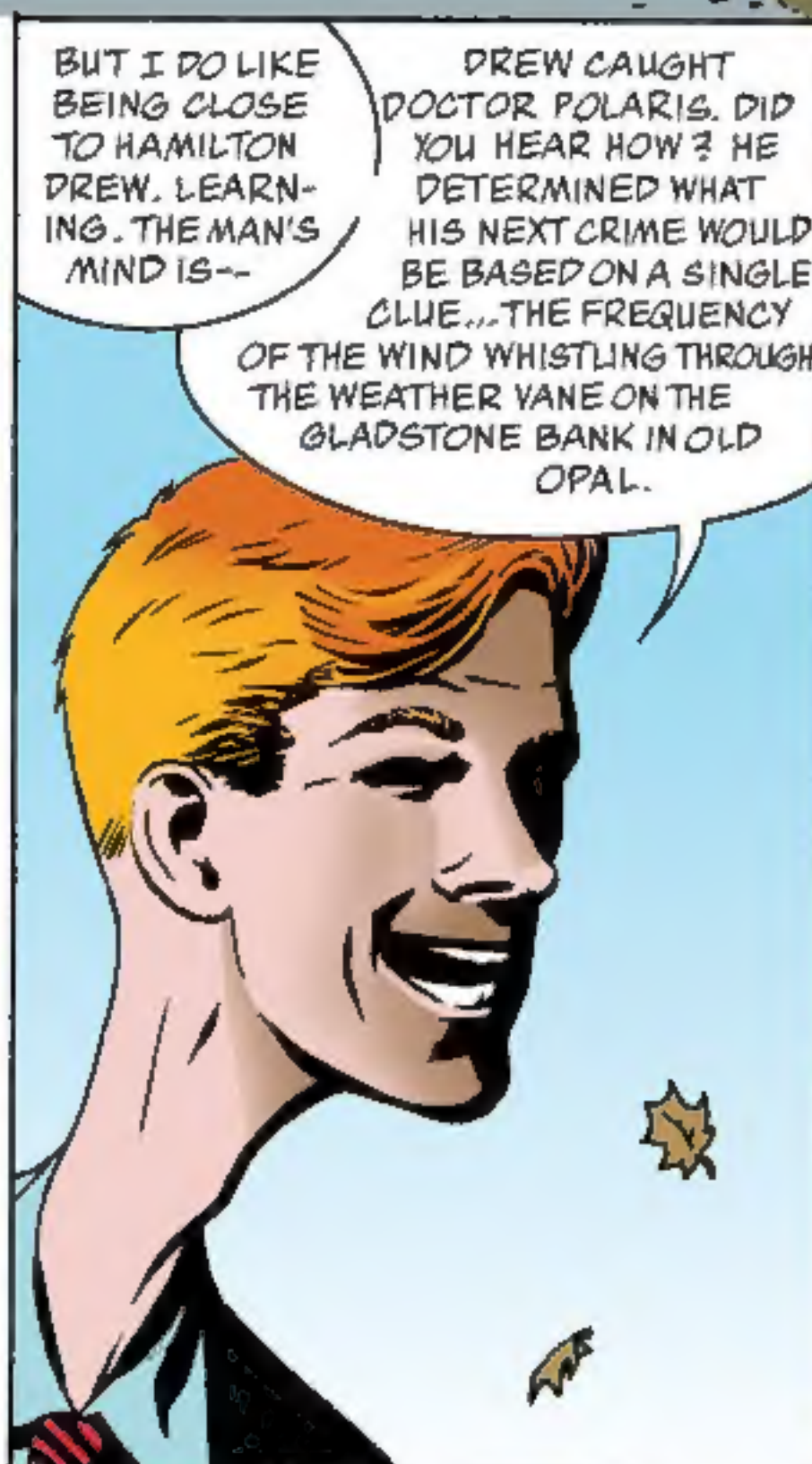
SO HOW ARE
YOU BOTH LIKING
OPAL?

LIKING,
JACK. NOT
LOVING.



I CAN'T EXPLAIN IT.
WE...EVER SINCE I MET
SUE, HOME HAS SIMPLY
BEEN *WHEREVER*
WE'RE TOGETHER.

THERE'S A
GYPSY STRAIN
IN BOTH OF
US.



BUT I DO LIKE
BEING CLOSE
TO HAMILTON
DREW. LEARN-
ING. THE MAN'S
MIND IS--

DREW CAUGHT
DOCTOR POLARIS. DID
YOU HEAR HOW? HE
DETERMINED WHAT
HIS NEXT CRIME WOULD
BE BASED ON A SINGLE
CLUE...THE FREQUENCY
OF THE WIND WHISTLING THROUGH
THE WEATHER VANE ON THE
GLADSTONE BANK IN OLD
OPAL.



AND YOU JUST CAUGHT THE WEATHER
WIZARD BY NOTICING ONE CLUE... THAT
HE CAUSED EVERY INCLEMENT THING TO
HIT TURK COUNTY EXCEPT HAIL.

FACE IT, RALPH,
YOU'RE A GREAT
DETECTIVE,
TOO.

YOU
HEAR THAT,
BABY?



WILL YOU AT *LEAST* STAY IN OPAL A WHILE?

DON'T GET US WRONG, JACK,
WE MAY STAY *FOREVER*. FATE HAS
A WAY OF PULLING US TO PARTS *FAR*
AND *WIDE*, THAT'S ALL.

OKAY.
THAT'S ALL I
CAN ASK.



IT'S BEEN A *PLEASURE*
KNOWING YOU *BOTH*.

I NEVER MET HAWK-MAN. THE ORIGINAL. BUT I SAW FILMS. BLACK AND WHITE NEWSREELS. COLOR FOOTAGE ON TV OF HIM LATER ON, WHEN THE WORLD WENT "EGYPT-CRAZY" IN THE SEVENTIES.

HE FLEW WITH **FORCE**. MORE FORCE THAN GRACE.

BLACK CONDOR ON THE OTHER HAND... IS THE MOST GRACEFUL THING I'VE EVER SEEN FLY.

HE'S REWRITING THE BOOK ON AERIAL MOVES.

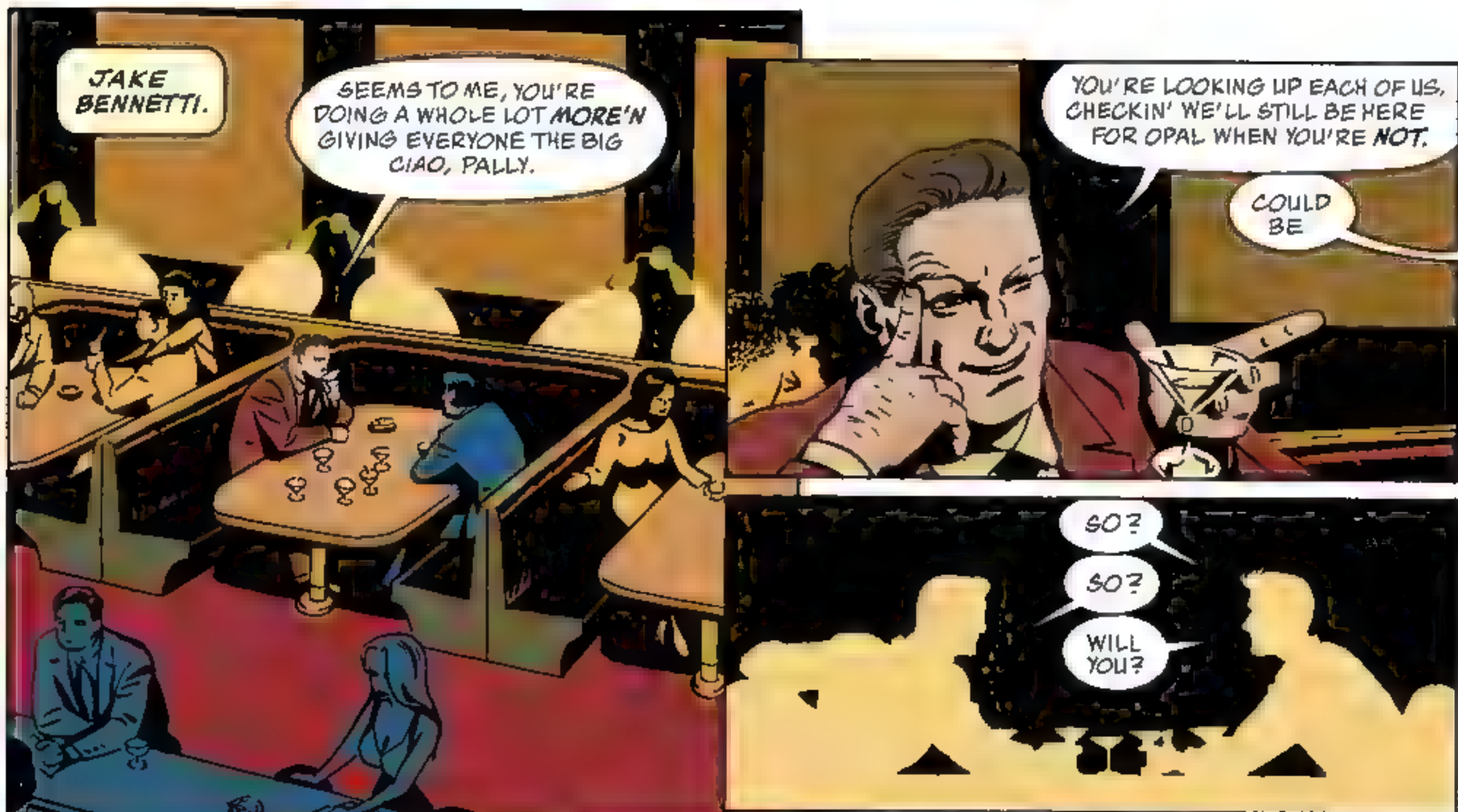
AND I DON'T EVEN NEED TO ASK...

HE'S **STAYING** IN OPAL. HE'S HAPPY I GUESS THERE'S EVEN A **RUMOR** HE SMILED ONCE RECENTLY, 'THOUGH I BET IT ISN'T TRUE.

HE'S ALREADY DEFEATED **CAT MAN** AND A NEW VILLAIN, **SOCRATES JONES**.

NO, NOTHING TO ASK. ALL I HAVE TO DO WITH CONDOR...

...IS WATCH HIM SOAR.



JAKE BENNETTI.

SEEMS TO ME, YOU'RE DOING A WHOLE LOT MORE'N GIVING EVERYONE THE BIG CIAO, PALLY.

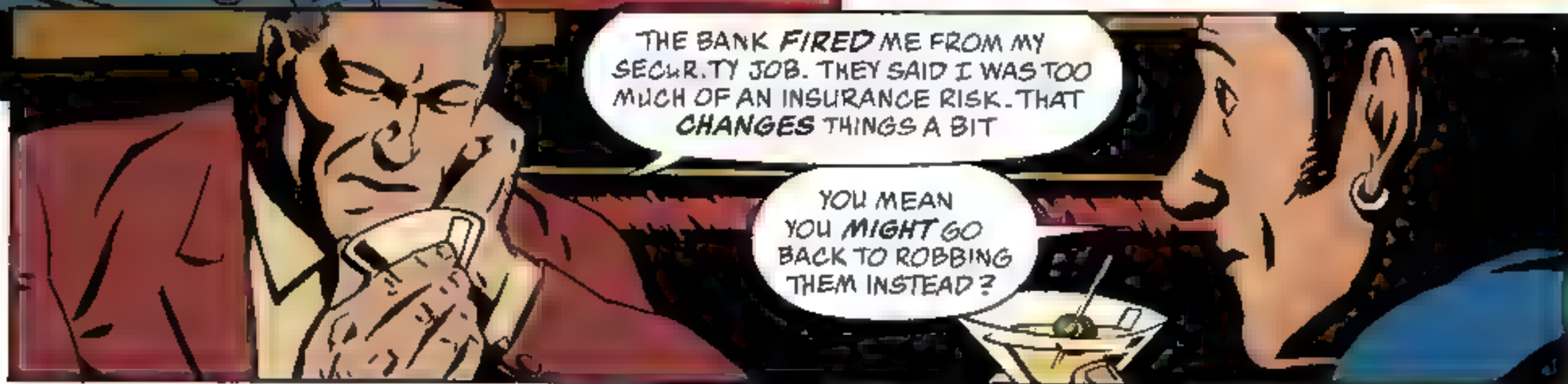
YOU'RE LOOKING UP EACH OF US, CHECKIN' WE'LL STILL BE HERE FOR OPAL WHEN YOU'RE NOT.

COULD BE

SO?

SO?

WILL YOU?



THE BANK FIRED ME FROM MY SECURITY JOB. THEY SAID I WAS TOO MUCH OF AN INSURANCE RISK. THAT CHANGES THINGS A BIT

YOU MEAN YOU MIGHT GO BACK TO ROBBING THEM INSTEAD?



MY CONSCIENCE LOOK LIKE A SEE-SAW TO YOU? I MADE A PROMISE TO SOMEONE I LOVE... I TOLD HER I'D GO STRAIGHT AND I WILL.



WHO?

YOU NEVER MET HER. YOU NEVER WILL.



ANYWAY, TO ILLUMINATE THE DARK CORNERS OF YOUR INQUIRY, LET ME ANNOUNCE THAT CLARENCE O'DARE HAS HIRED ME.



YOU'RE GOING TO BE A COP?

NO...YEAH... NO.

I FIGHT BAD GUYS. OPAL PAYS ME. THAT'S THE READER'S DIGEST VERSION



WHAT'S DIFFERENT ABOUT THIS MARTINI?

ANCHOVY-STUFFED OLIVES GOOD, huh?



SO YOU'RE
HAPPY?

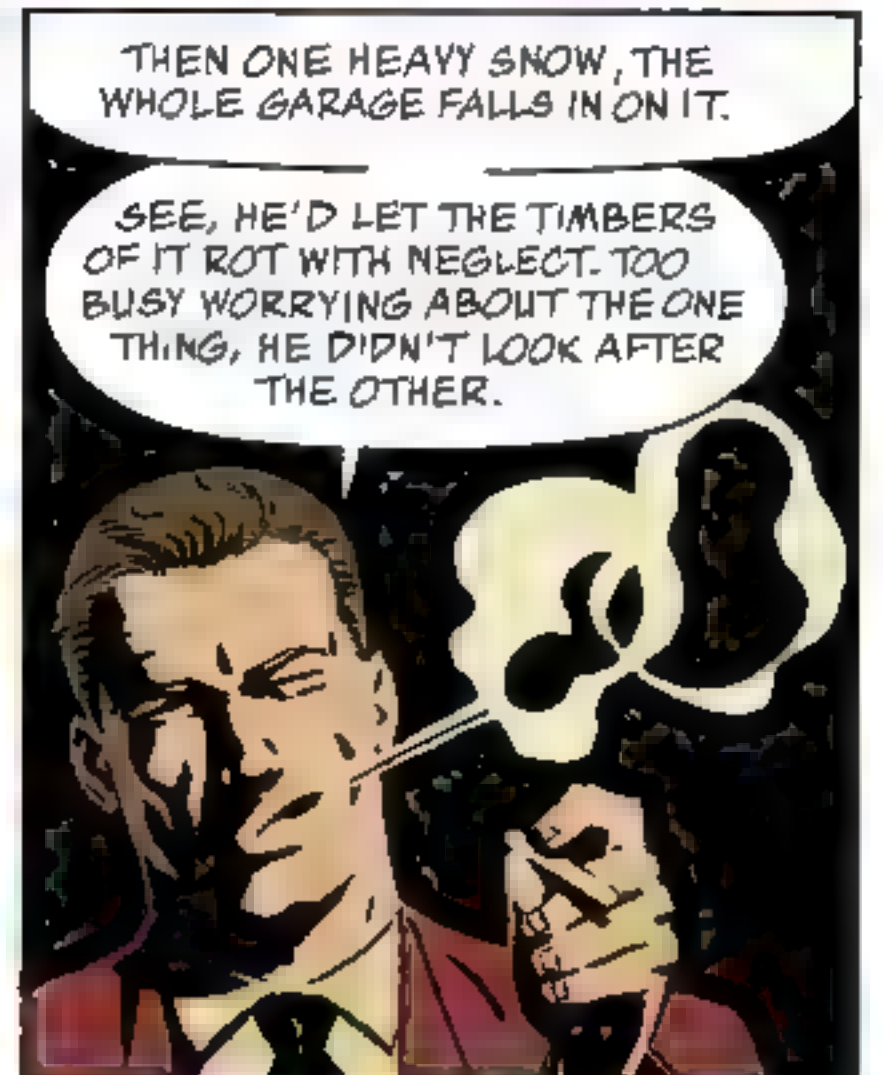
AND YOU'LL STAY
IN OPAL FOR THE
FORESEEABLE--



BUDDY BOY, I RECALL A **STORY** I
HEARD IN THE JOINT. DON'T ASK ME
WHICH STIR OR WHICH STINT 'CAUSE
THEY ALL **MERGE** INTO A HAZE OF
WEIGHT ROOMS AND BAD FOOD.



BUT IT CONCERNS A GUY WHO
LOVED HIS '56 STUDEBAKER. IT
WAS A BEAUT. AND THE GUY SPENT
EVERY SPARE CENT AND EVERY
SPARE MOMENT KEEPING IT ONE
SWEET RIDE.



THEN ONE HEAVY SNOW, THE
WHOLE GARAGE FALLS IN ON IT.

SEE, HE'D LET THE TIMBERS
OF IT ROT WITH NEGLECT. TOO
BUSY WORRYING ABOUT THE ONE
THING, HE DIDN'T LOOK AFTER
THE OTHER.



THAT'S YOU.

ME?

YOU AND
OPAL. OPAL'S
THE STUDE.
YOU'RE THE
GARAGE



TIME TO DO SOME WORK
ON YOUR GARAGE, JACKIE
BOY, 'CAUSE I GOT NEWS
FOR YOU ...



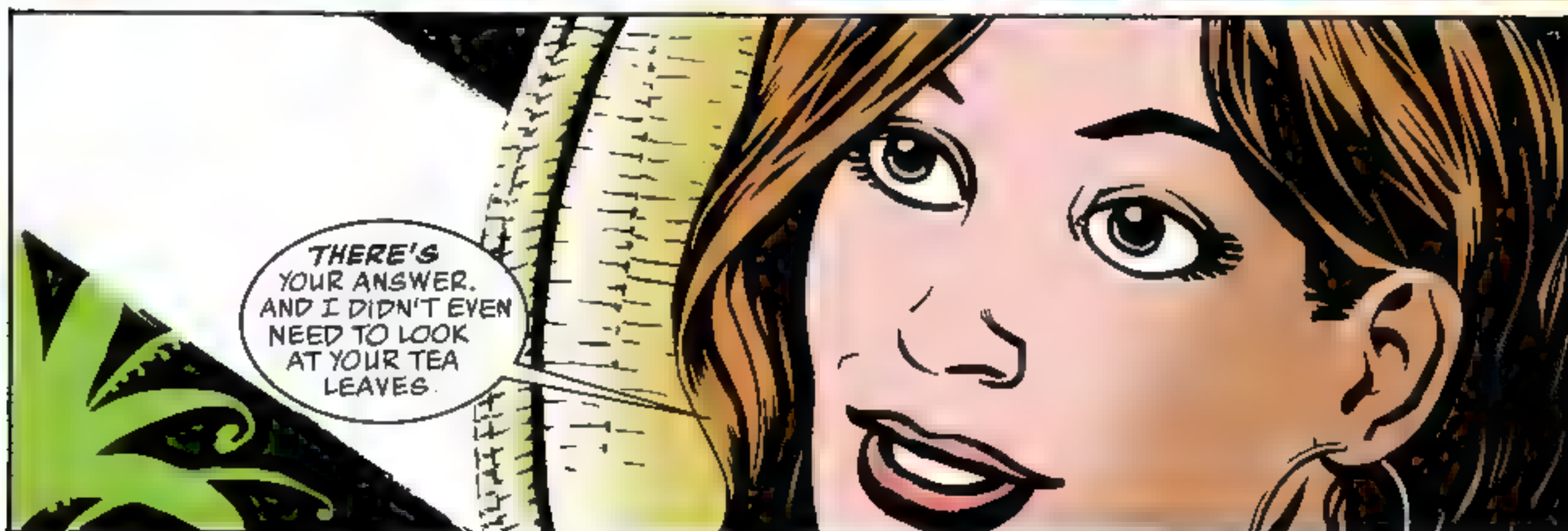
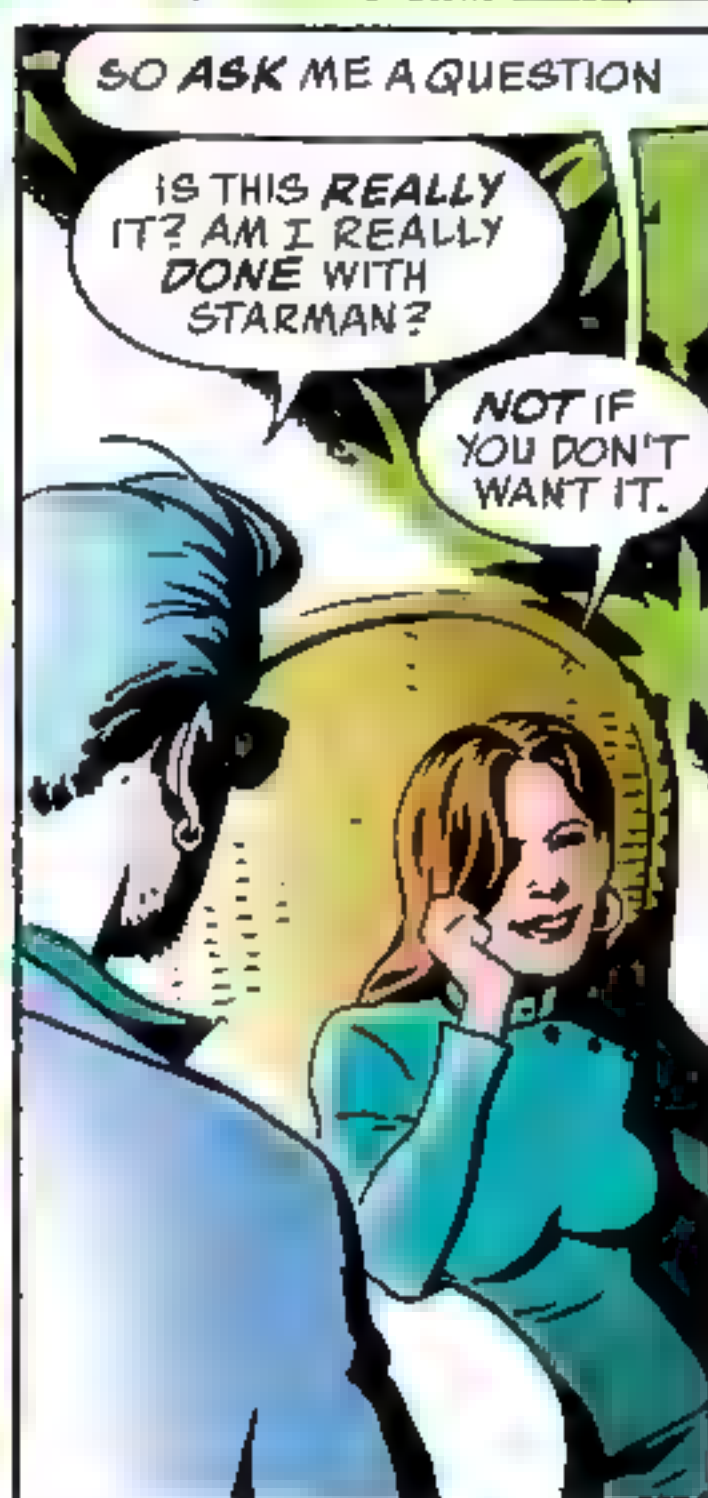
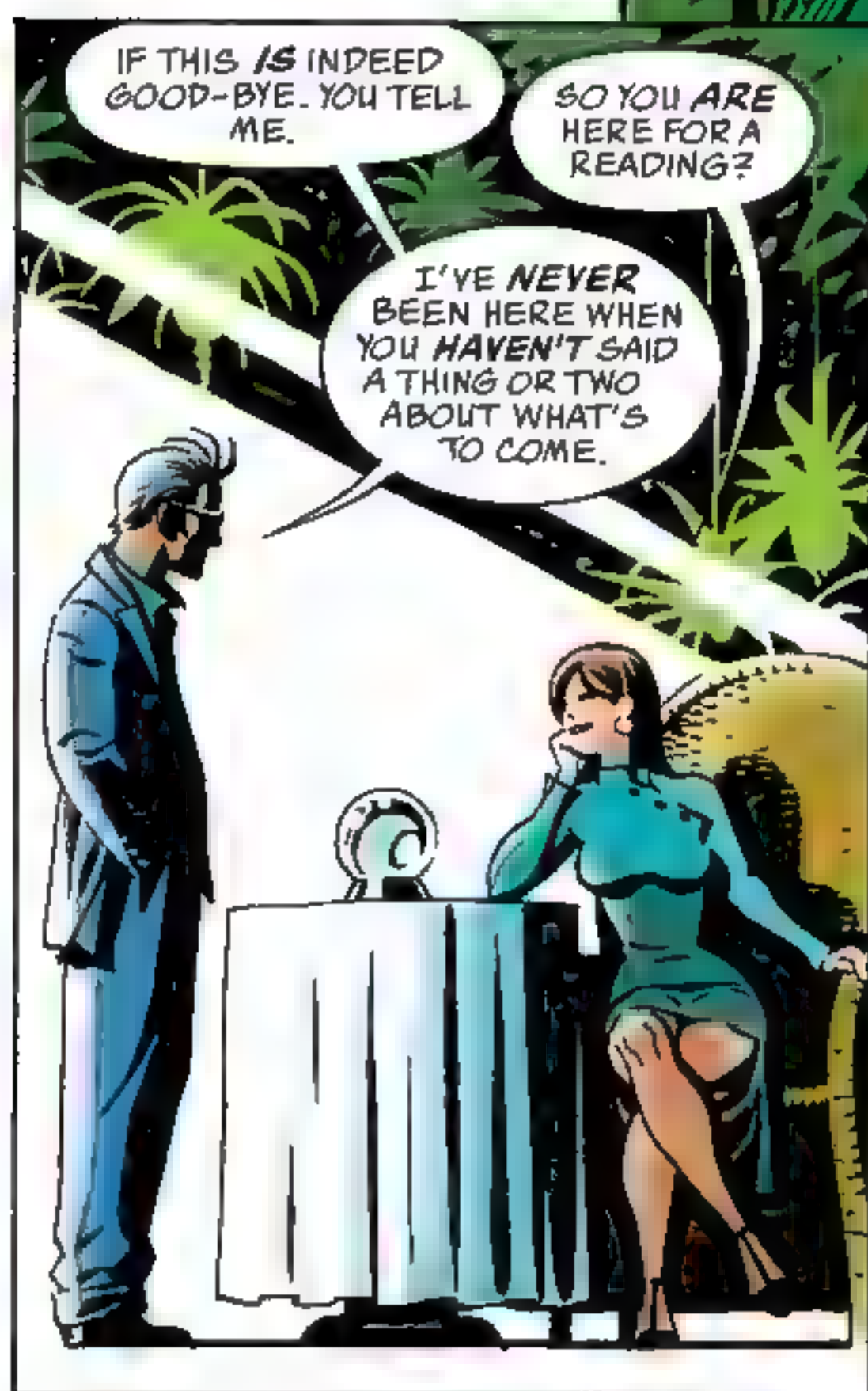
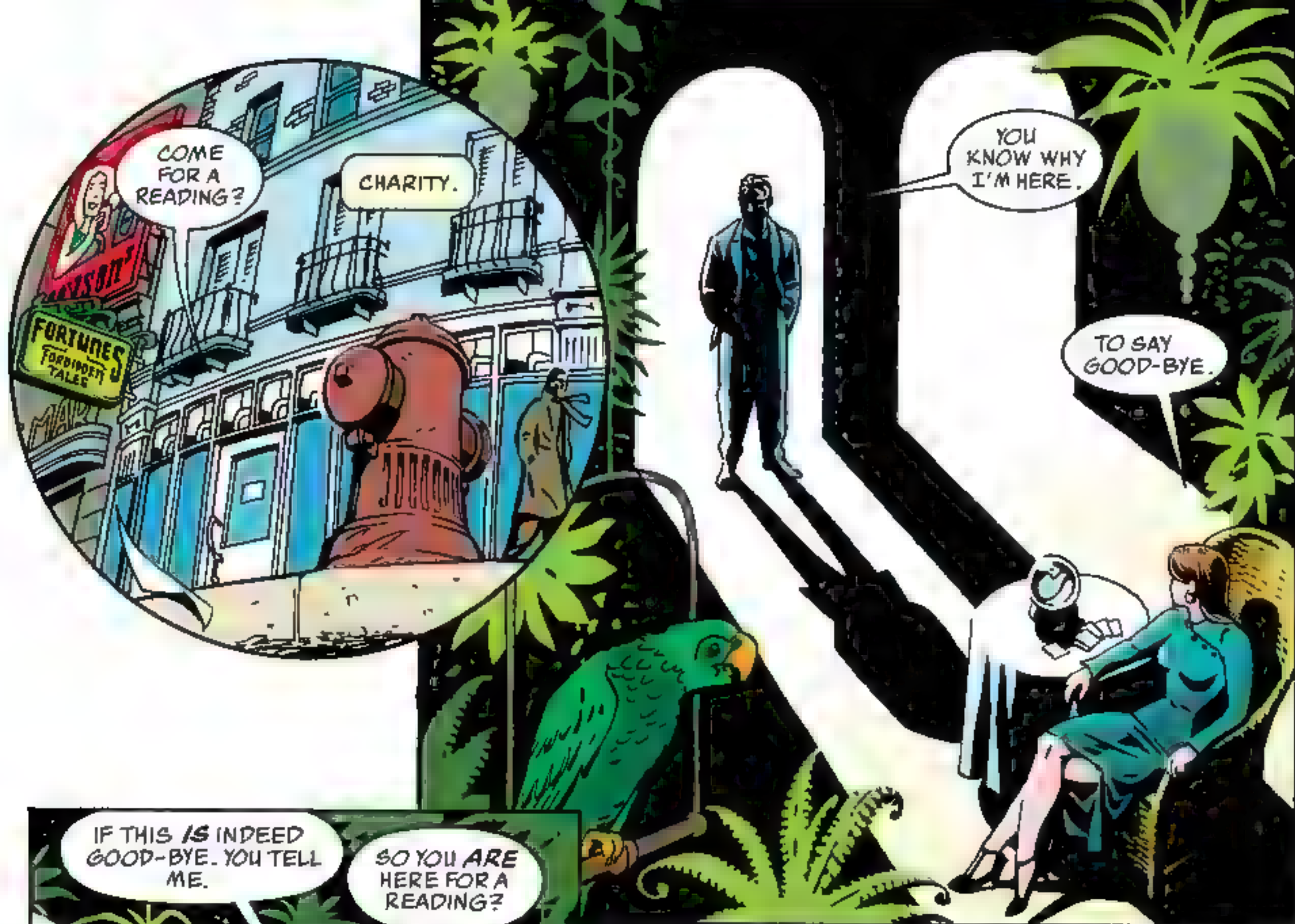
...OPAL'S
DOING JUST
FINE

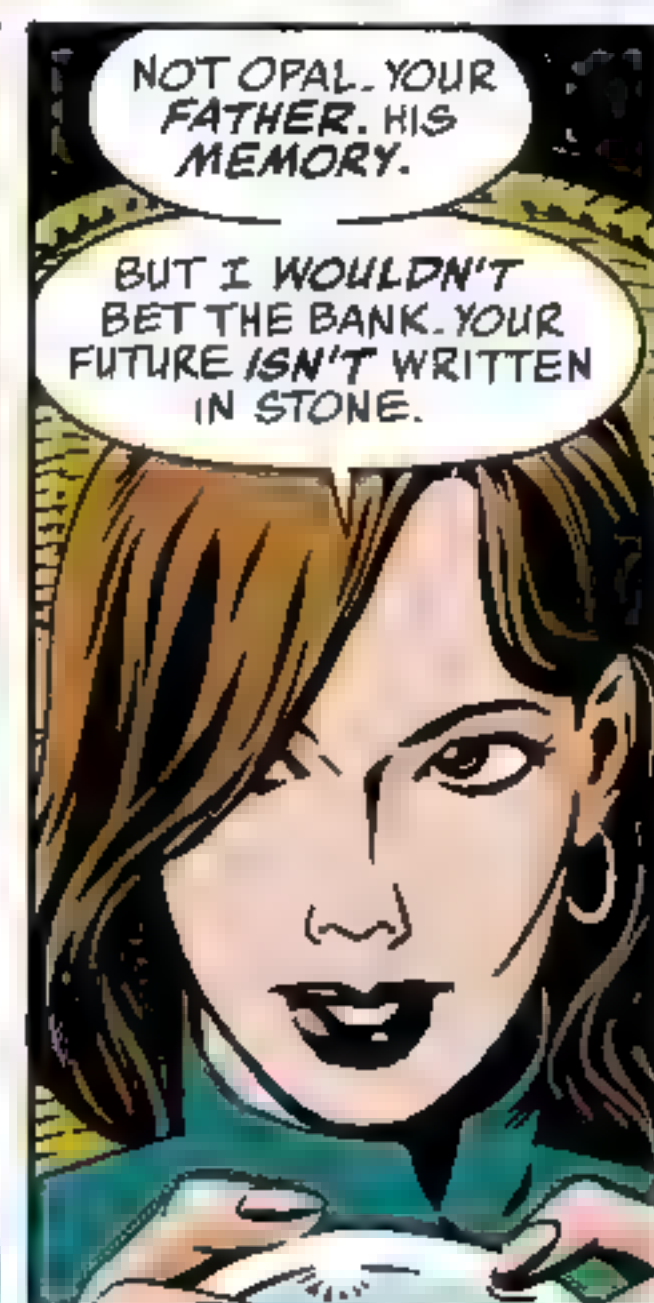
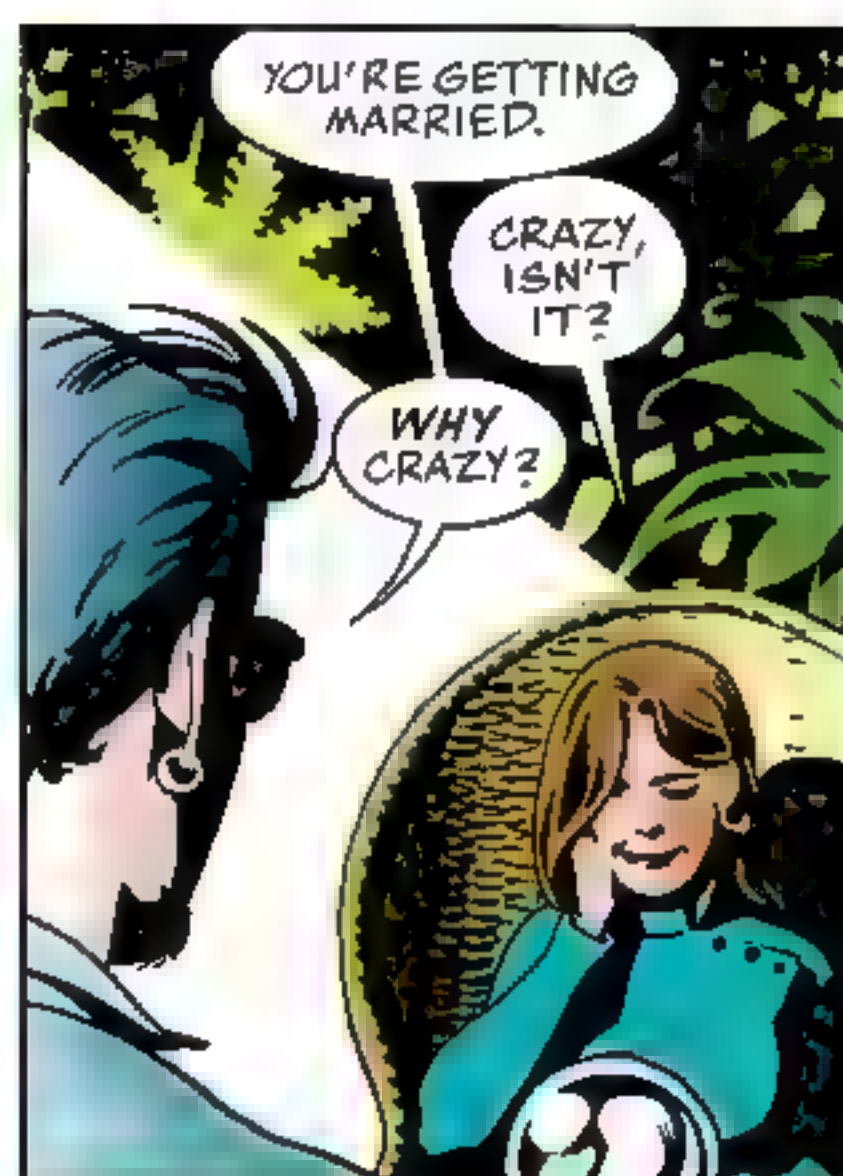
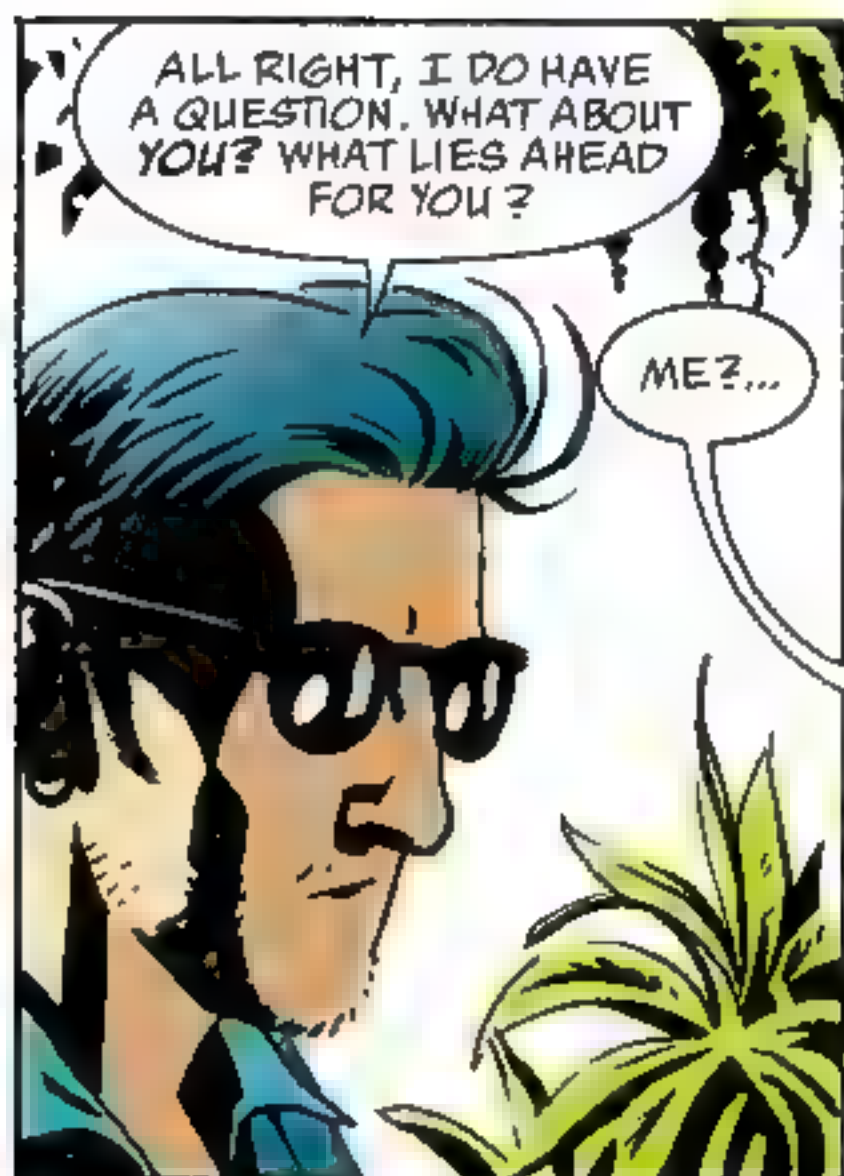


CHEERS.

SALUT.

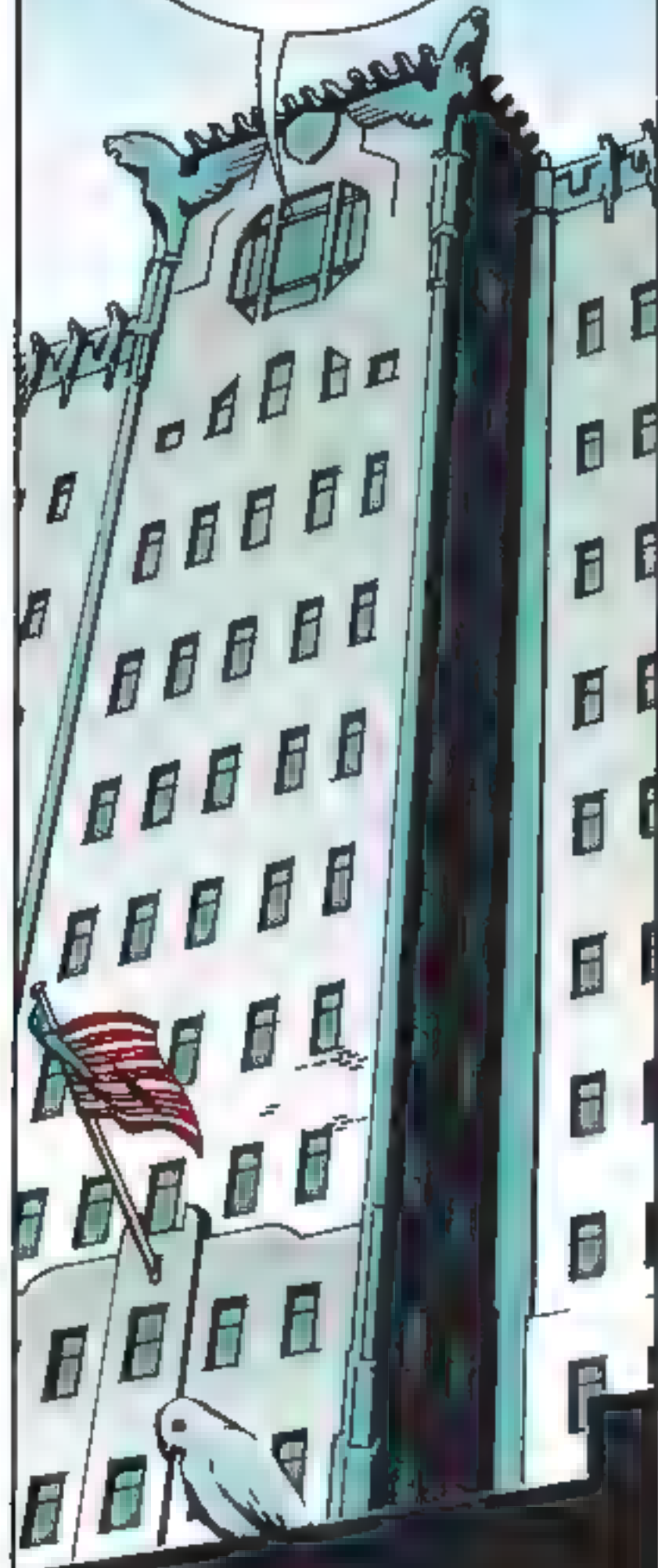
HEY, RAMON
TWO MORE.





THE O'DARES. CLARENCE
HOPE. MASON.

SO IT'S
OFFICIAL. YOU'RE
OPAL CITY
COMMISSIONER
OF POLICE.



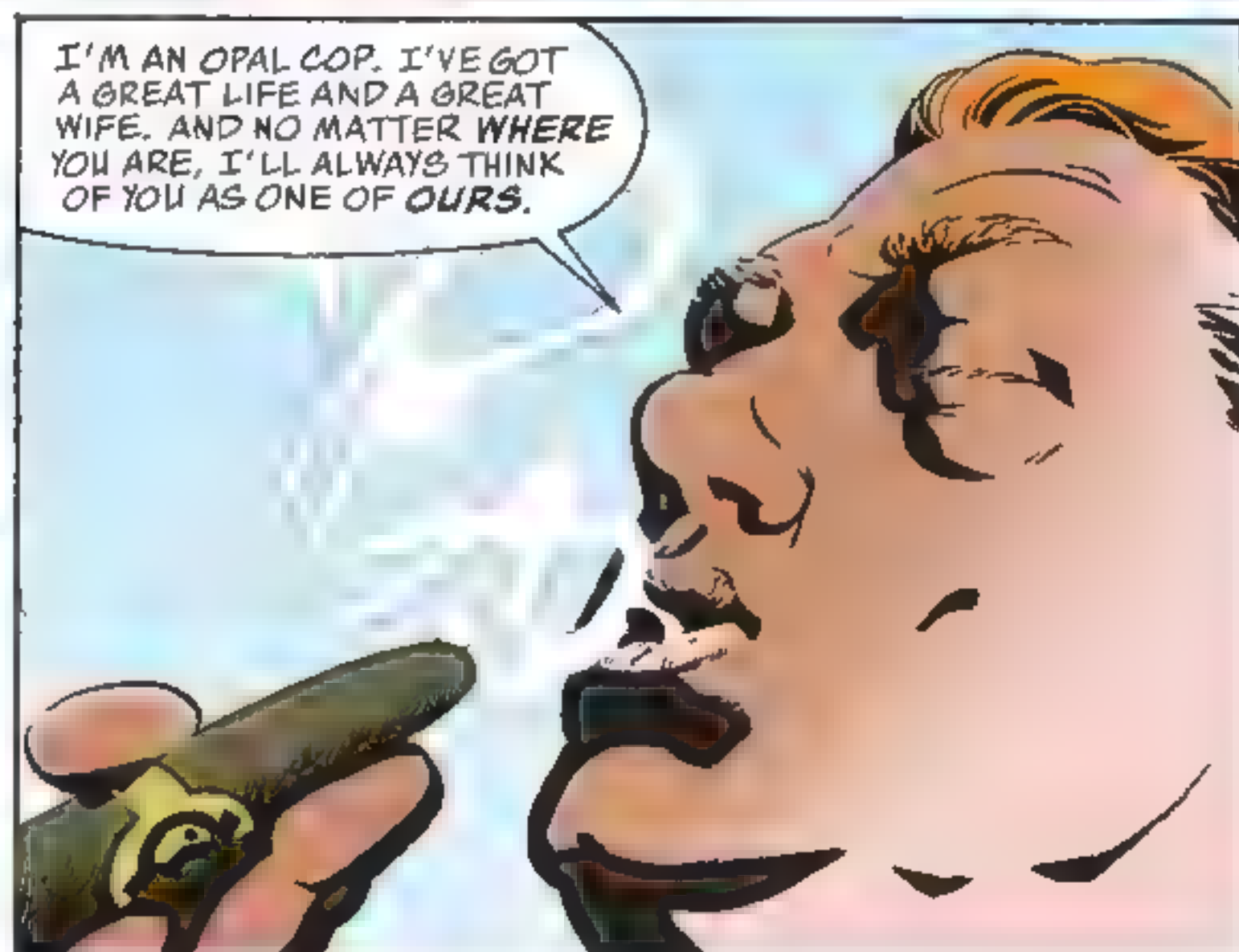
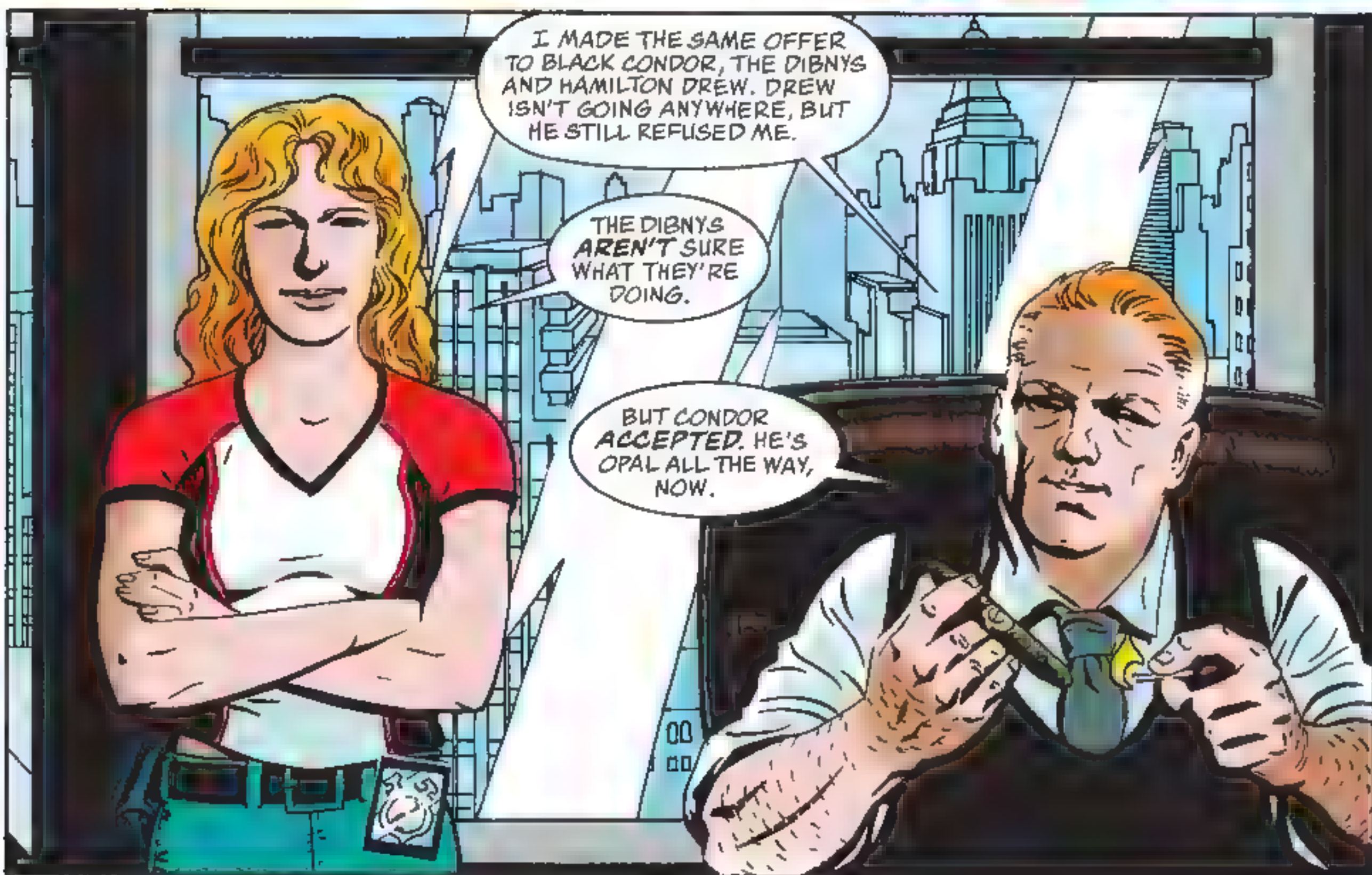
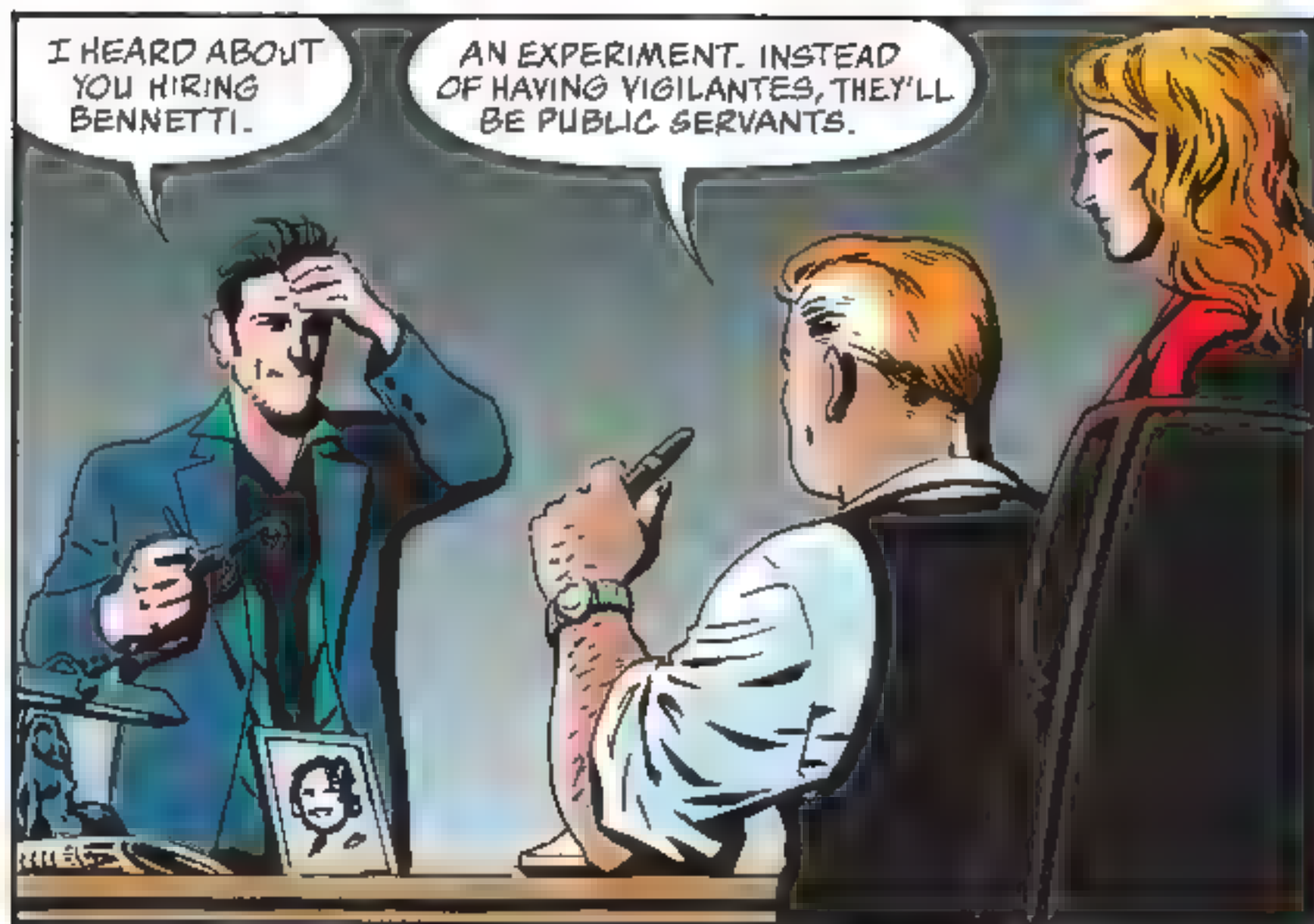
POLICE

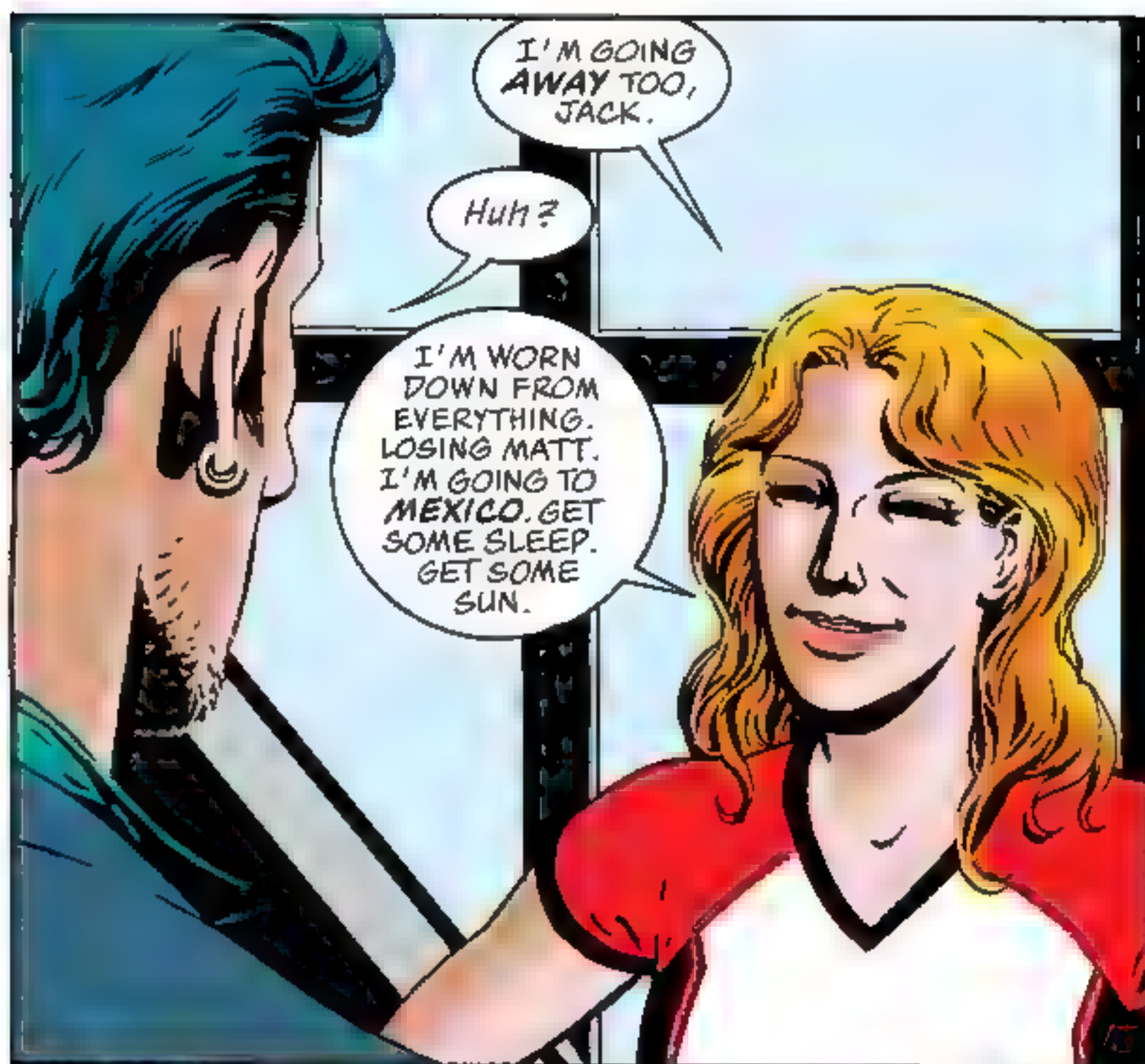
CONGRATULATIONS,
CLARENCE.

YEAH, WHO'D
HAVE THOUGHT
IT?

YOUR FATHER
WOULD HAVE
BEEN PROUD AND
YOUR BROTHER,
MATT.



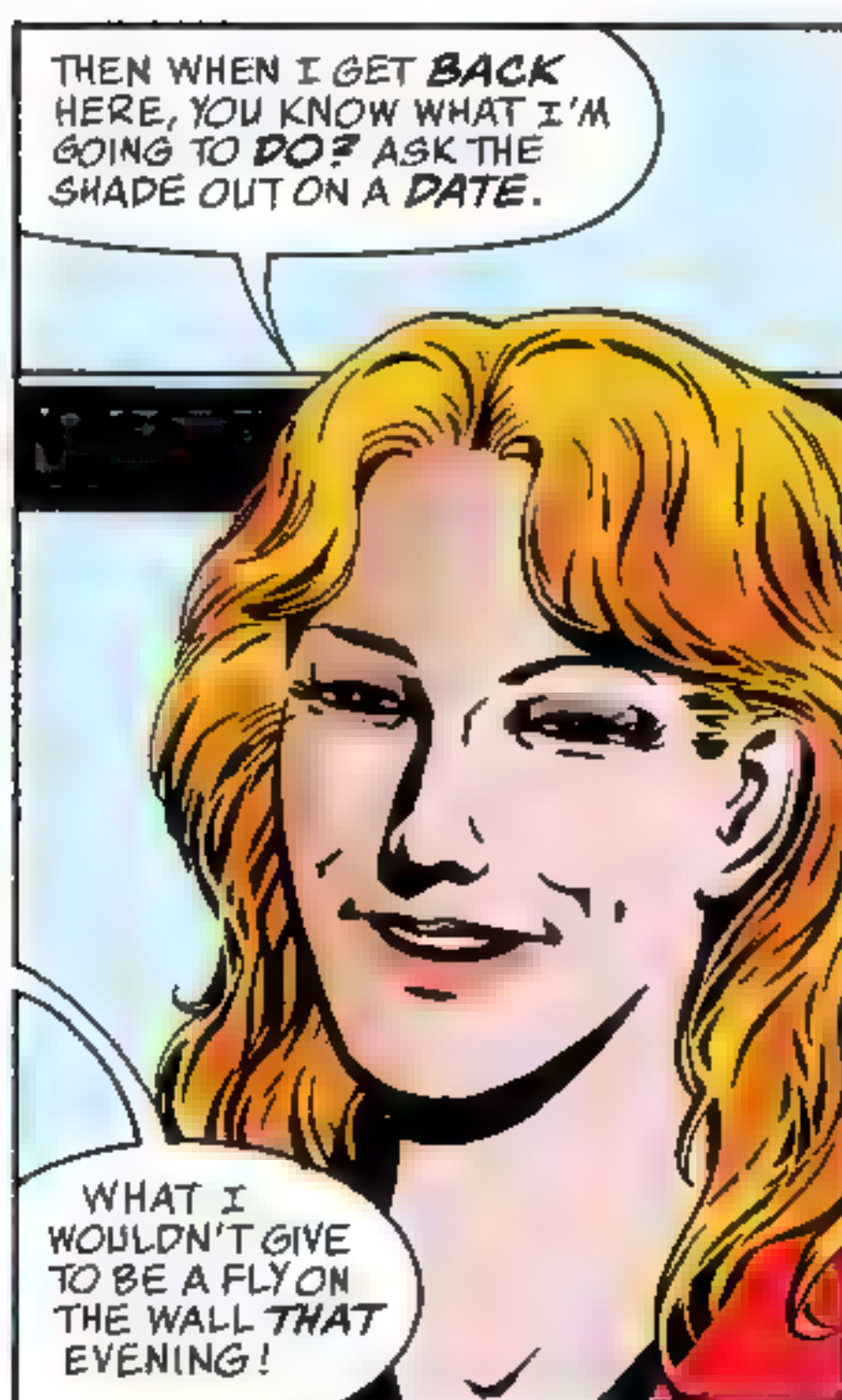




I'M GOING AWAY TOO, JACK.

Huh?

I'M WORN DOWN FROM EVERYTHING. LOSING MATT. I'M GOING TO MEXICO. GET SOME SLEEP. GET SOME SUN.



THEN WHEN I GET BACK HERE, YOU KNOW WHAT I'M GOING TO DO? ASK THE SHADE OUT ON A DATE.

WHAT I WOULDN'T GIVE TO BE A FLY ON THE WALL THAT EVENING!

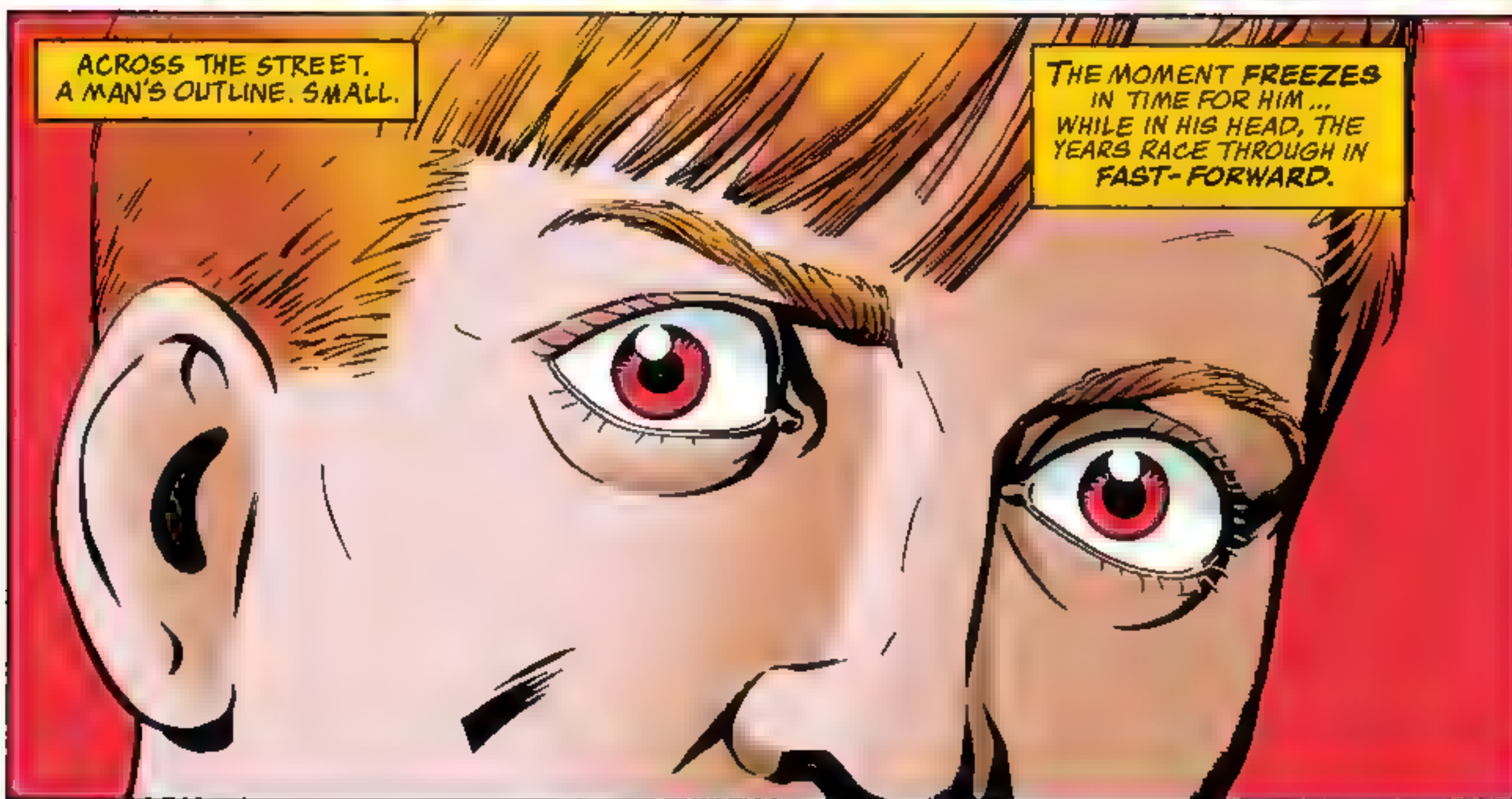


MASON.

JACK.



IT CATCHES MASON'S EYE. A GLINT... SPARKLING SOFTLY FAR OFF.



ACROSS THE STREET. A MAN'S OUTLINE. SMALL.

THE MOMENT FREEZES IN TIME FOR HIM... WHILE IN HIS HEAD, THE YEARS RACE THROUGH IN FAST-FORWARD.

MASON SEES THE FUTURE. ON ONE PATH-- HIM AND CHARITY TOGETHER. LAUGHING. A FUTURE OF HAPPY SUNDAYS. EGG-NOG CHRISTMAS EVES. ICE SKATING ON HER FIFTIETH BIRTHDAY. HE SEES A SON OF HIS OWN IN OPAL BLUE. MASON'S LIFE-- EVERYTHING HE'D EVER HOPED IT WOULD BE.

ON ANOTHER PATH HE MERELY SEES A GRAVE NEXT TO HIS BROTHER.

AND THEN THE CURRENT OF LIFE IN THE PRESENT FLOWS ANEW... DRAGGING MASON IN ITS EDDY.

HE MOVES BEFORE HE CAN THINK NOT TO...

... AS HAPPY SUNDAYS, SKATES AND EGG-NOG...



... ARE GONE
FOREVER.

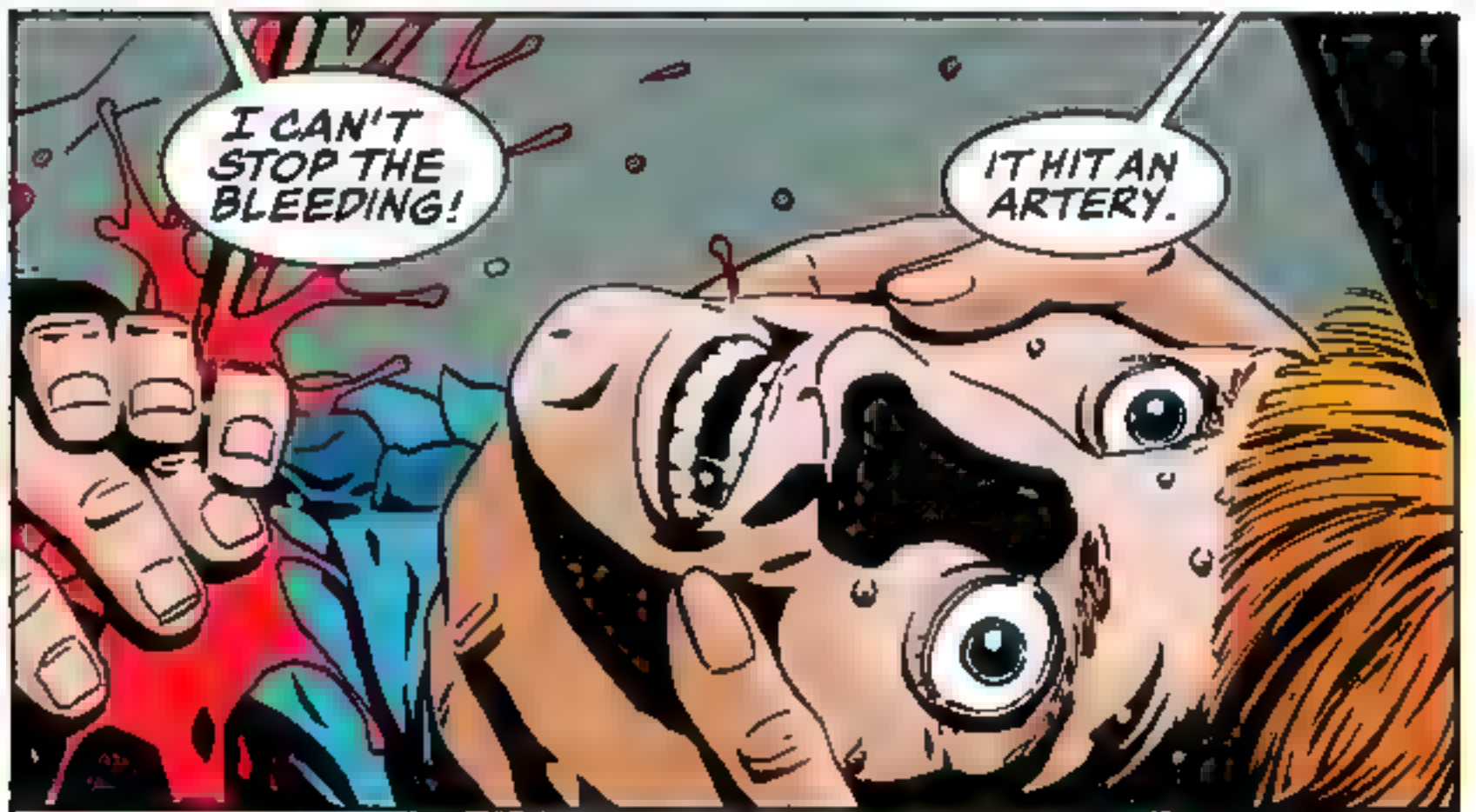
MASON!!

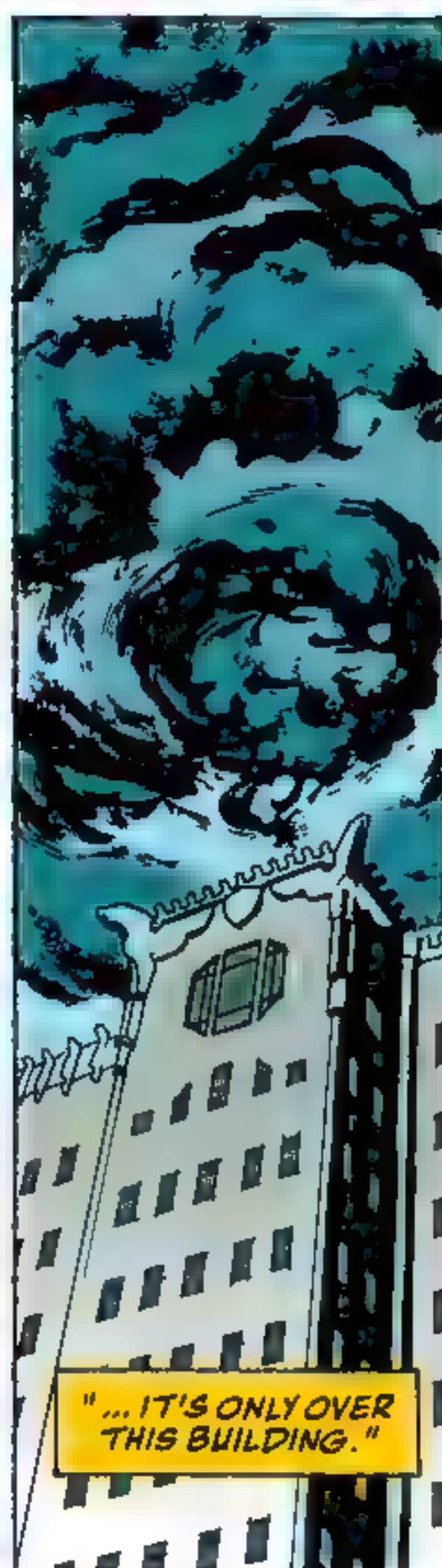
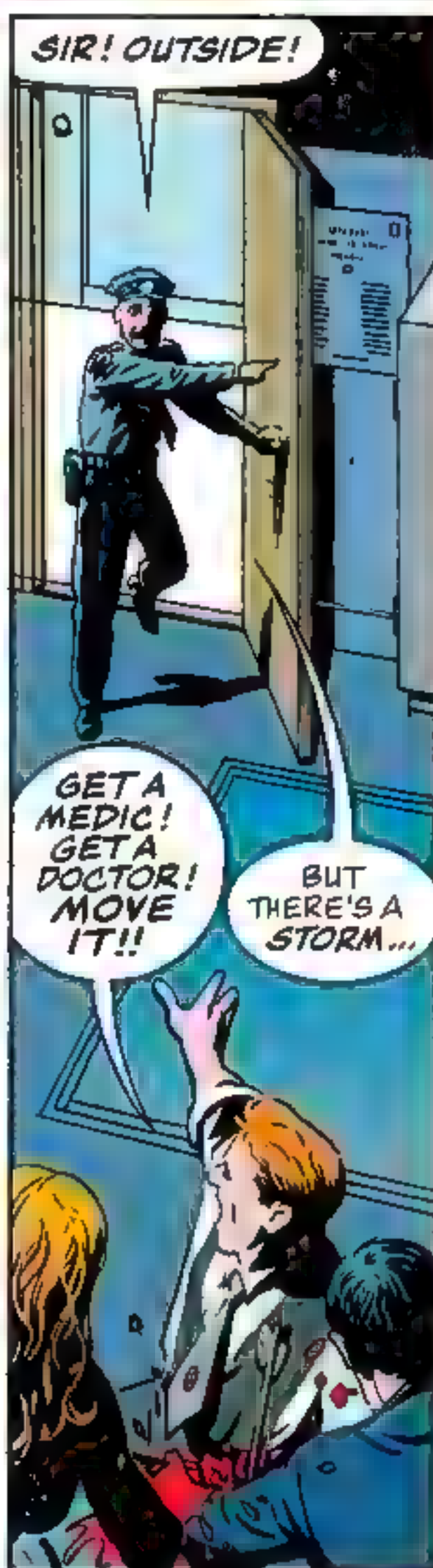
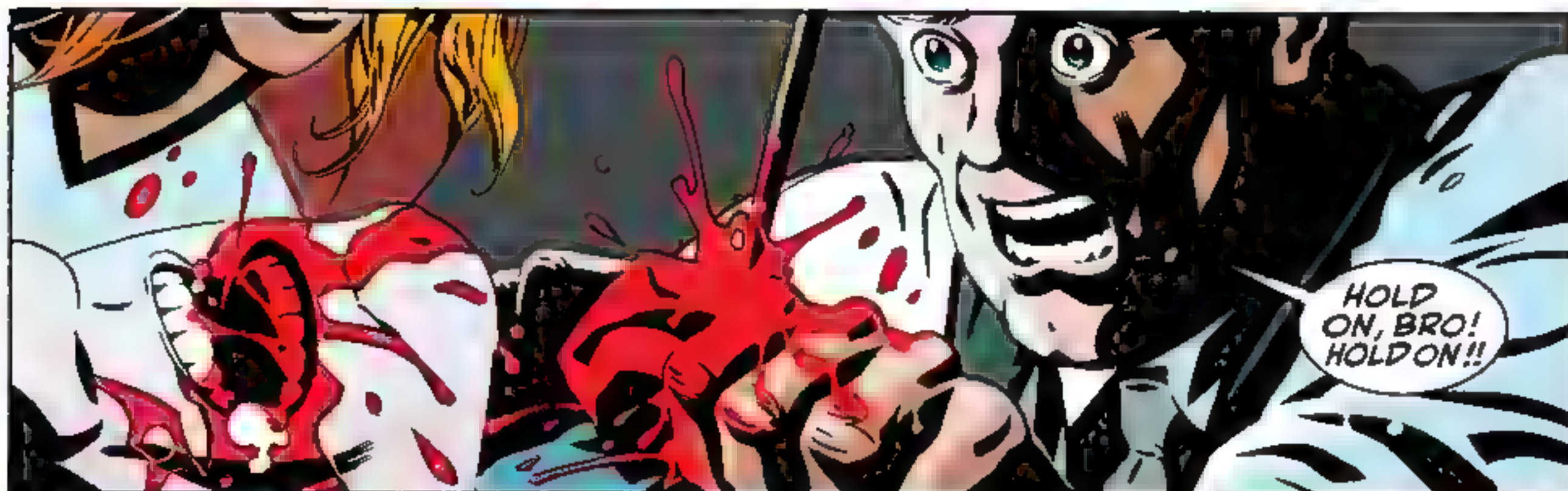
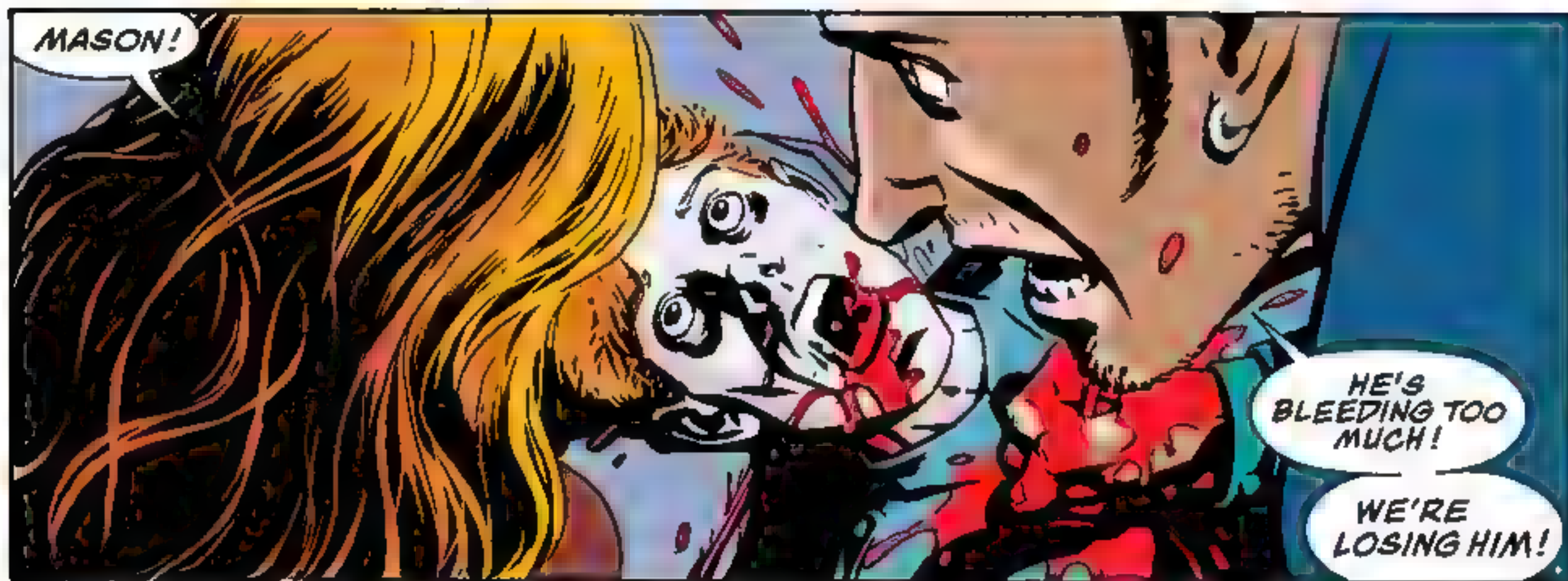


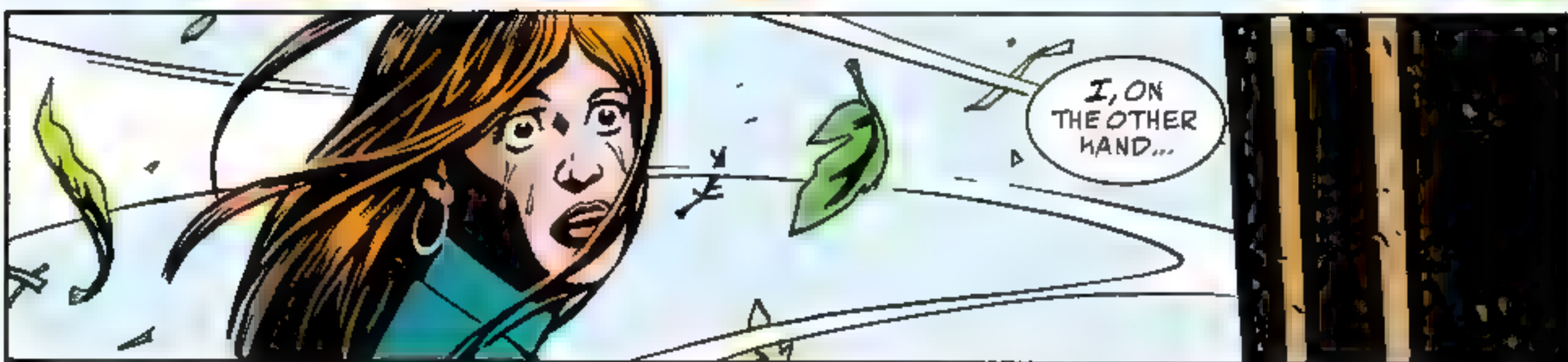
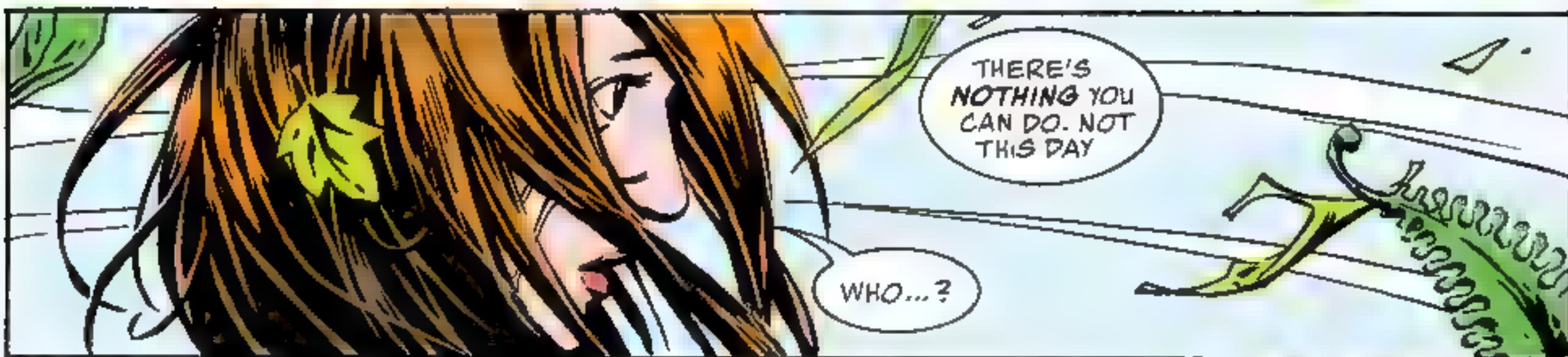
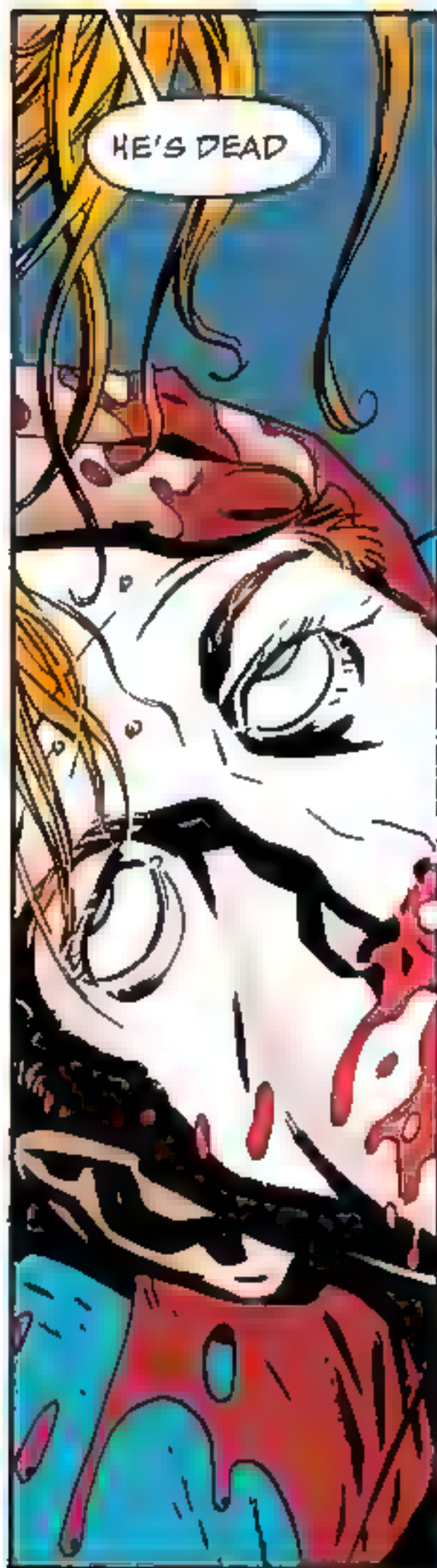
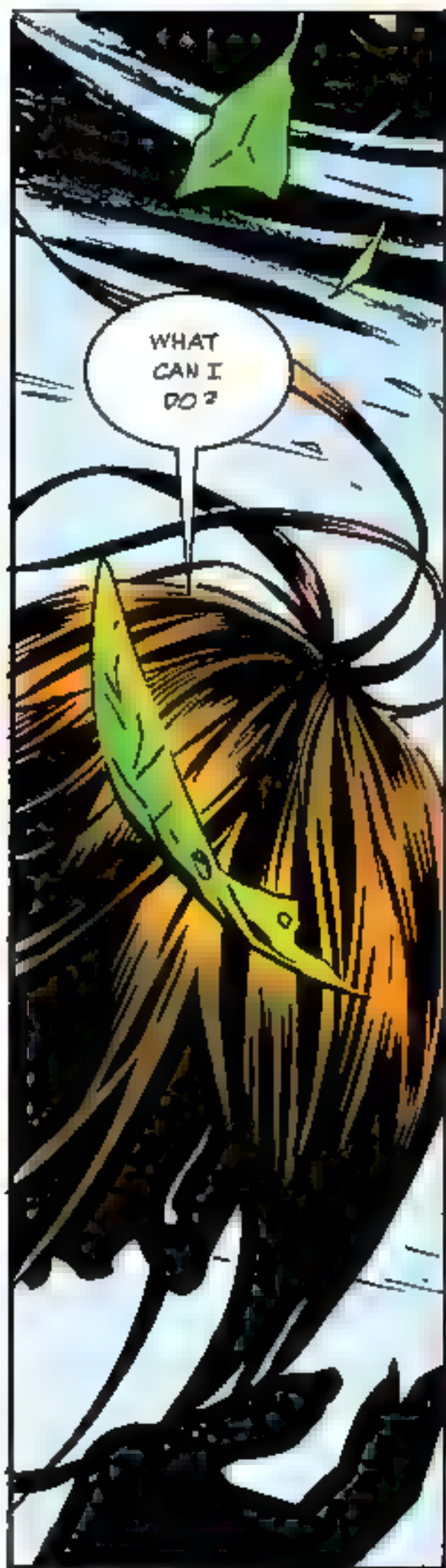


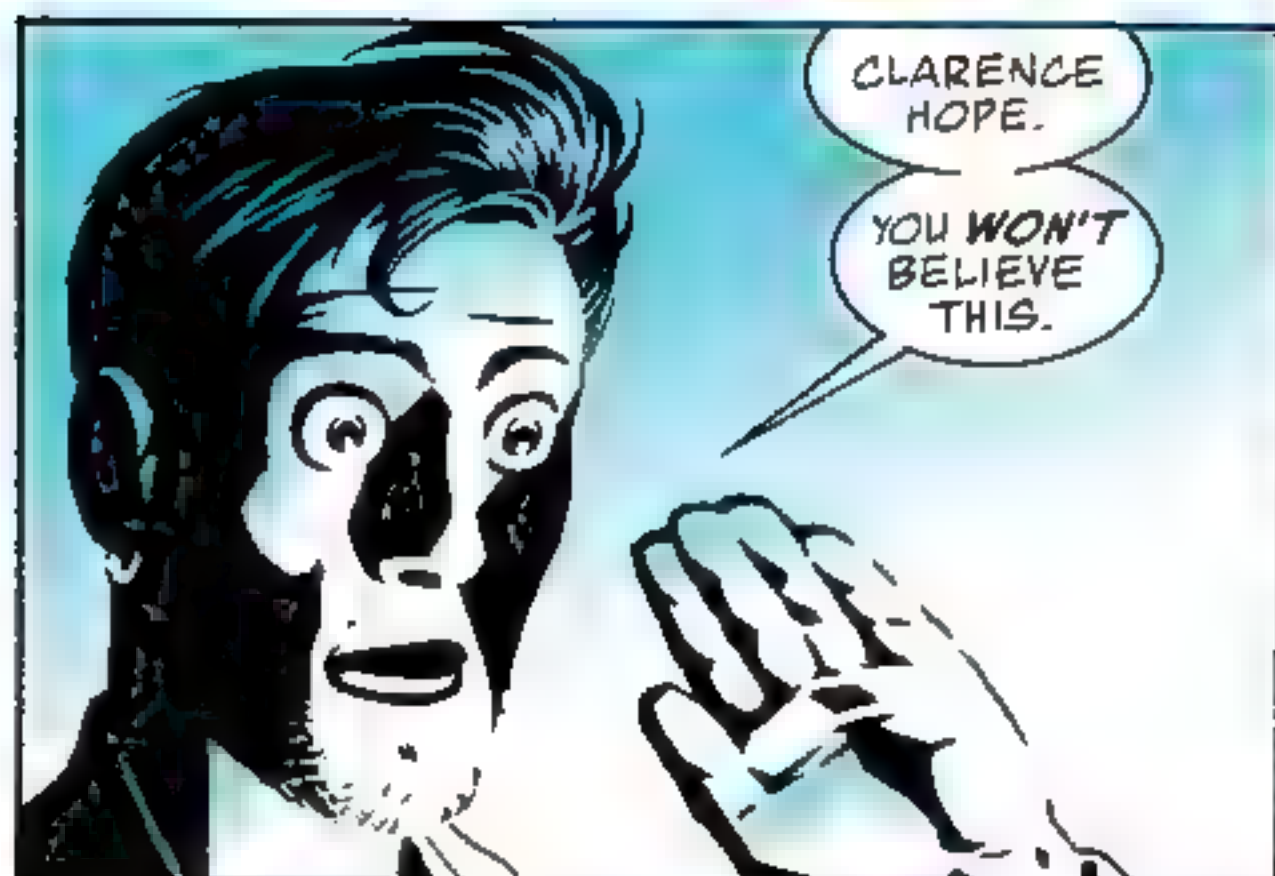
THERE HAD BEEN A TIME... ONCE... SHE HAD SEEN A FUTURE FOR MASON WHERE HIS BRAVERY WOULD BE HIS DEATH.

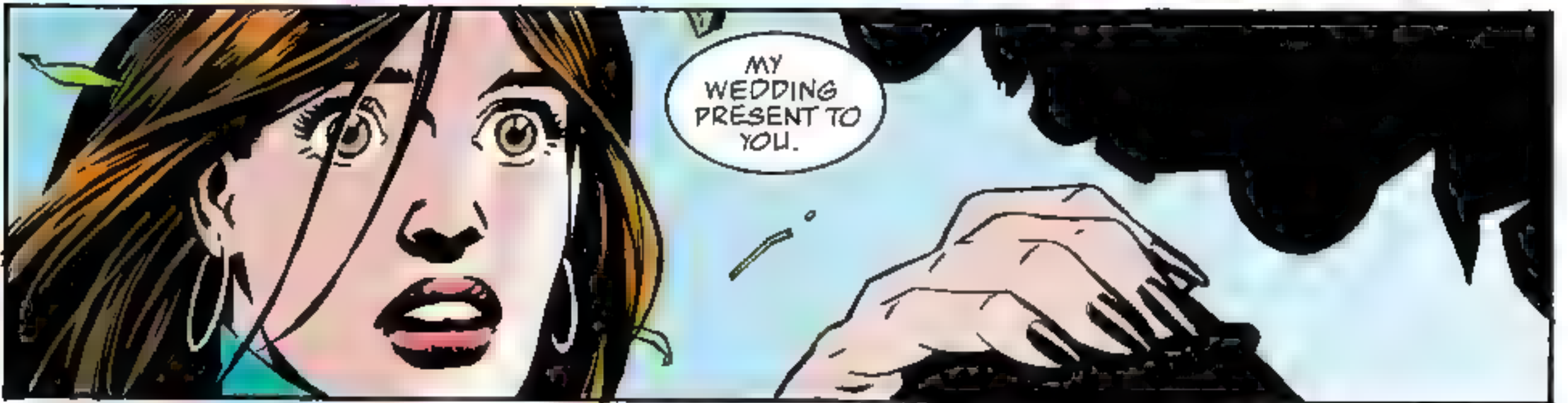
THAT PROPHECY SHE'D LONG TRIED TO FORGET...

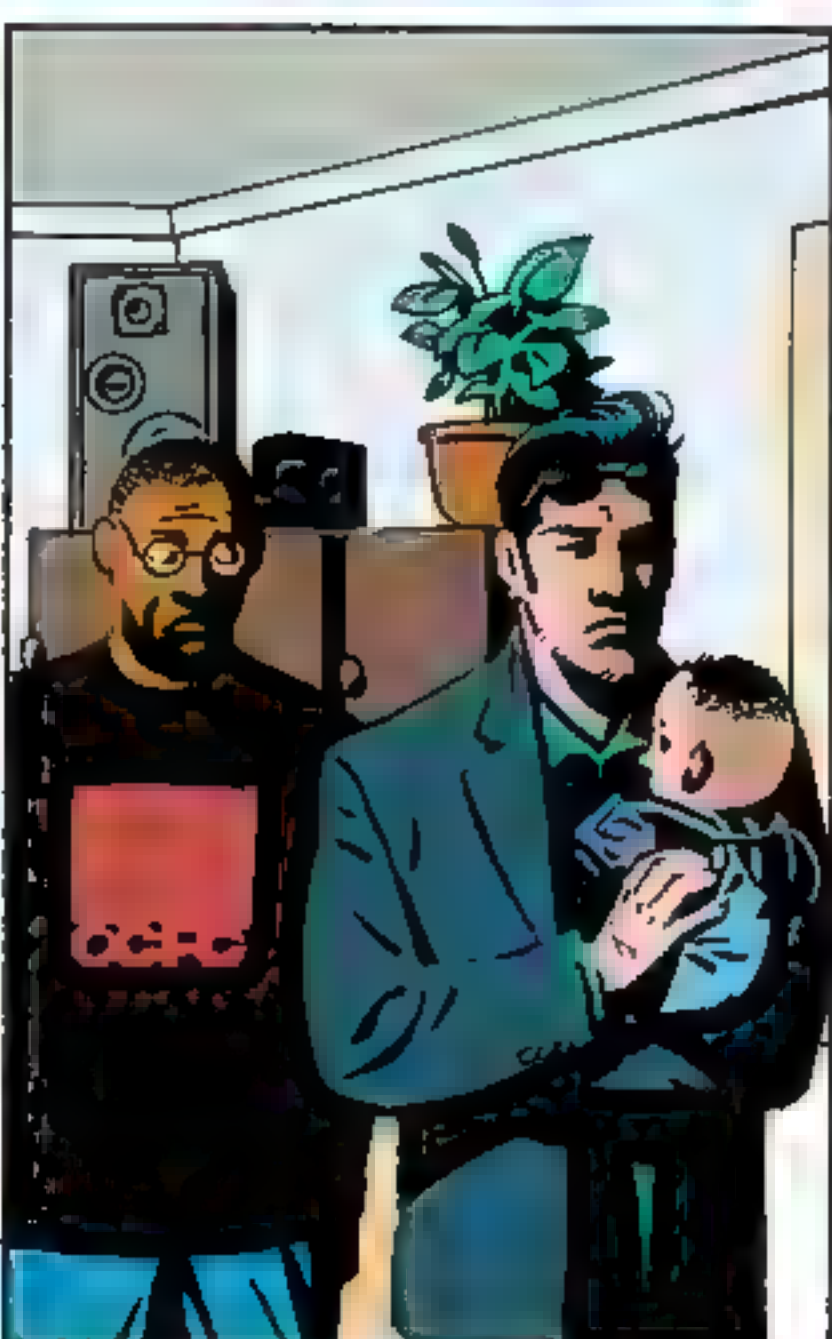
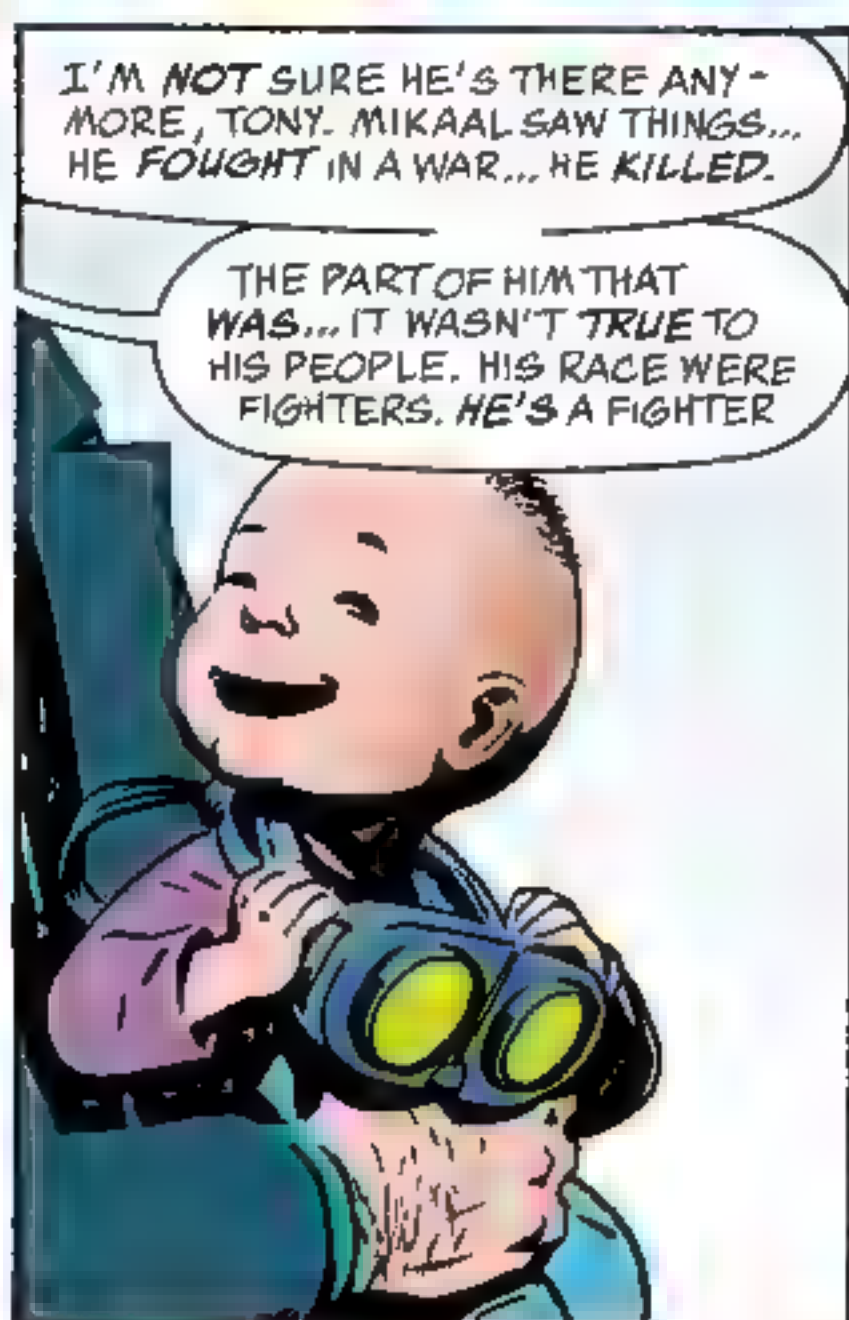
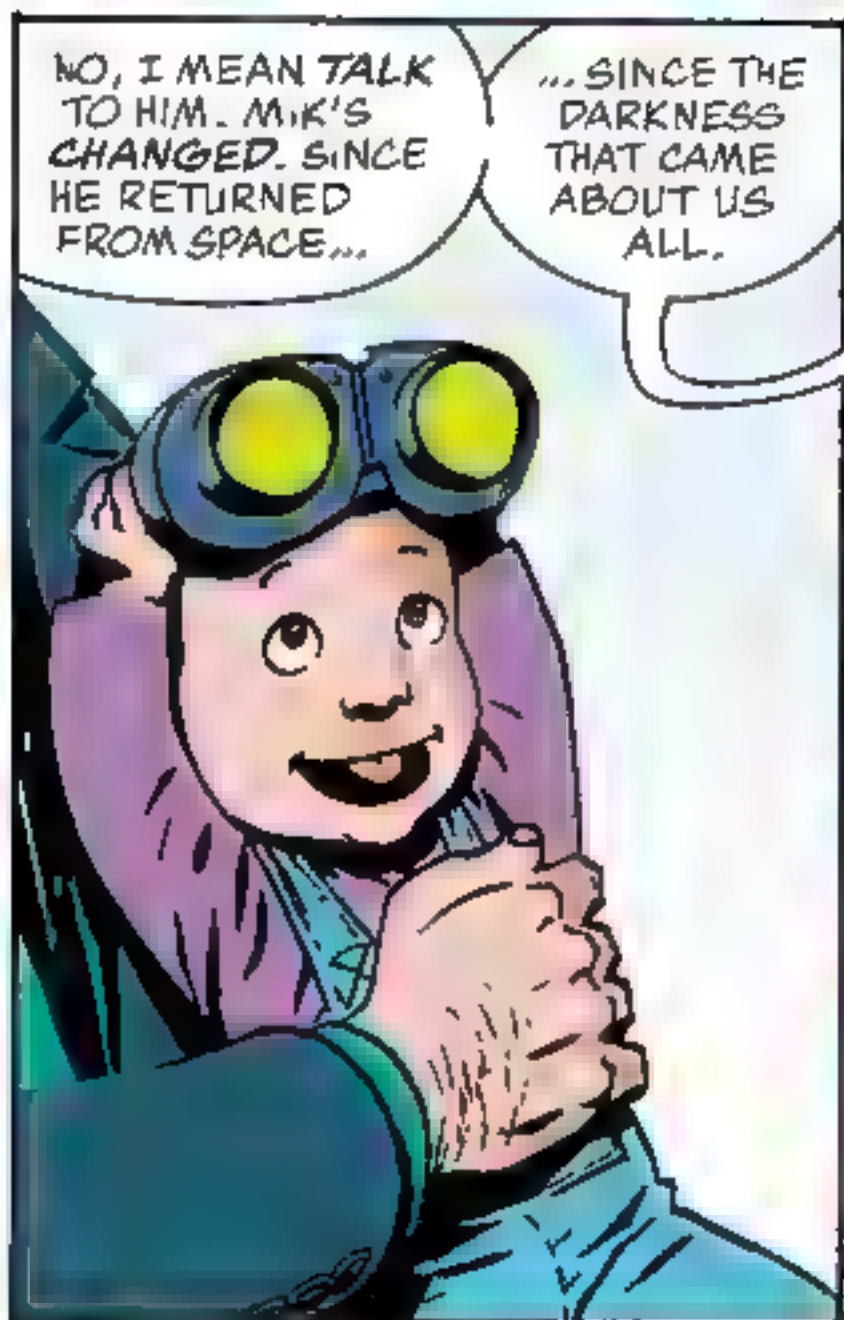
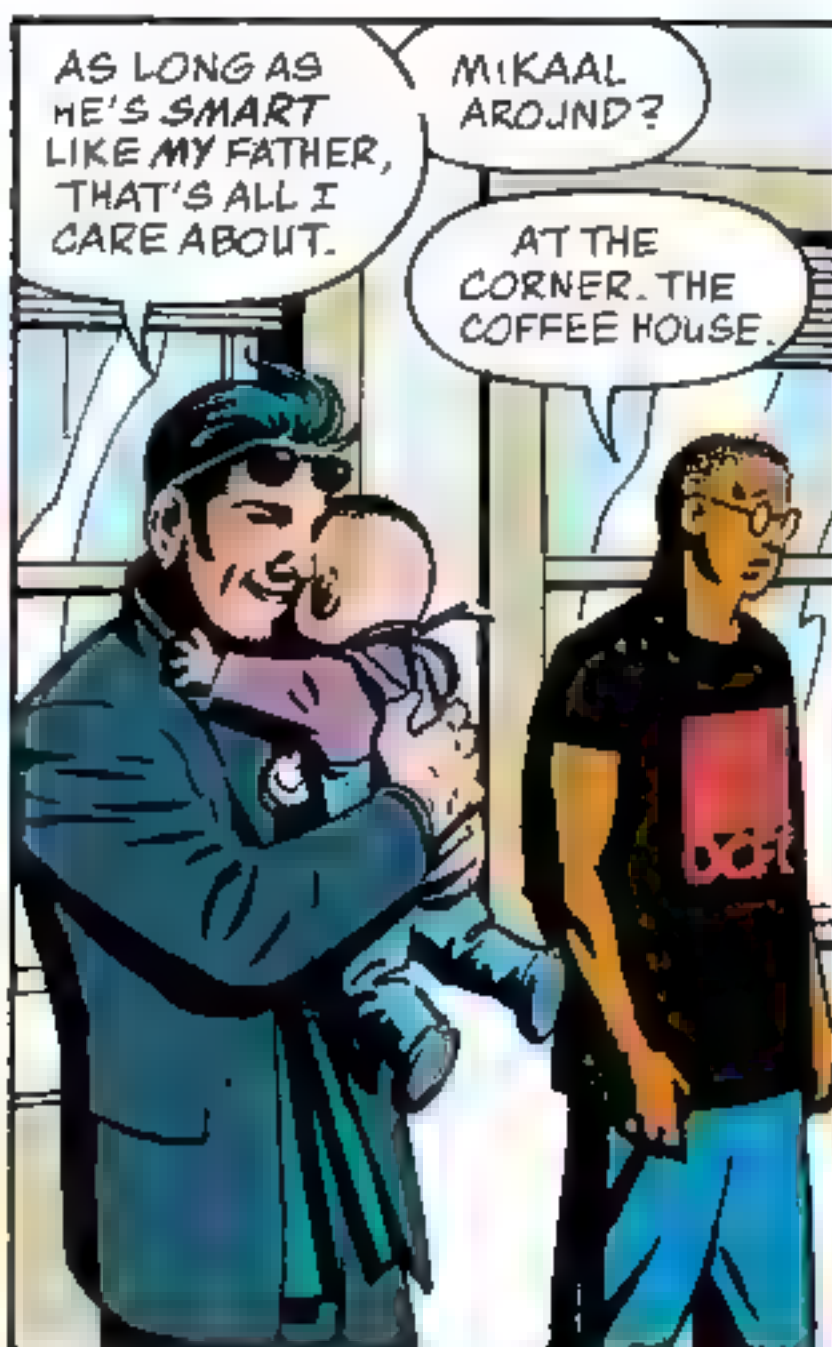
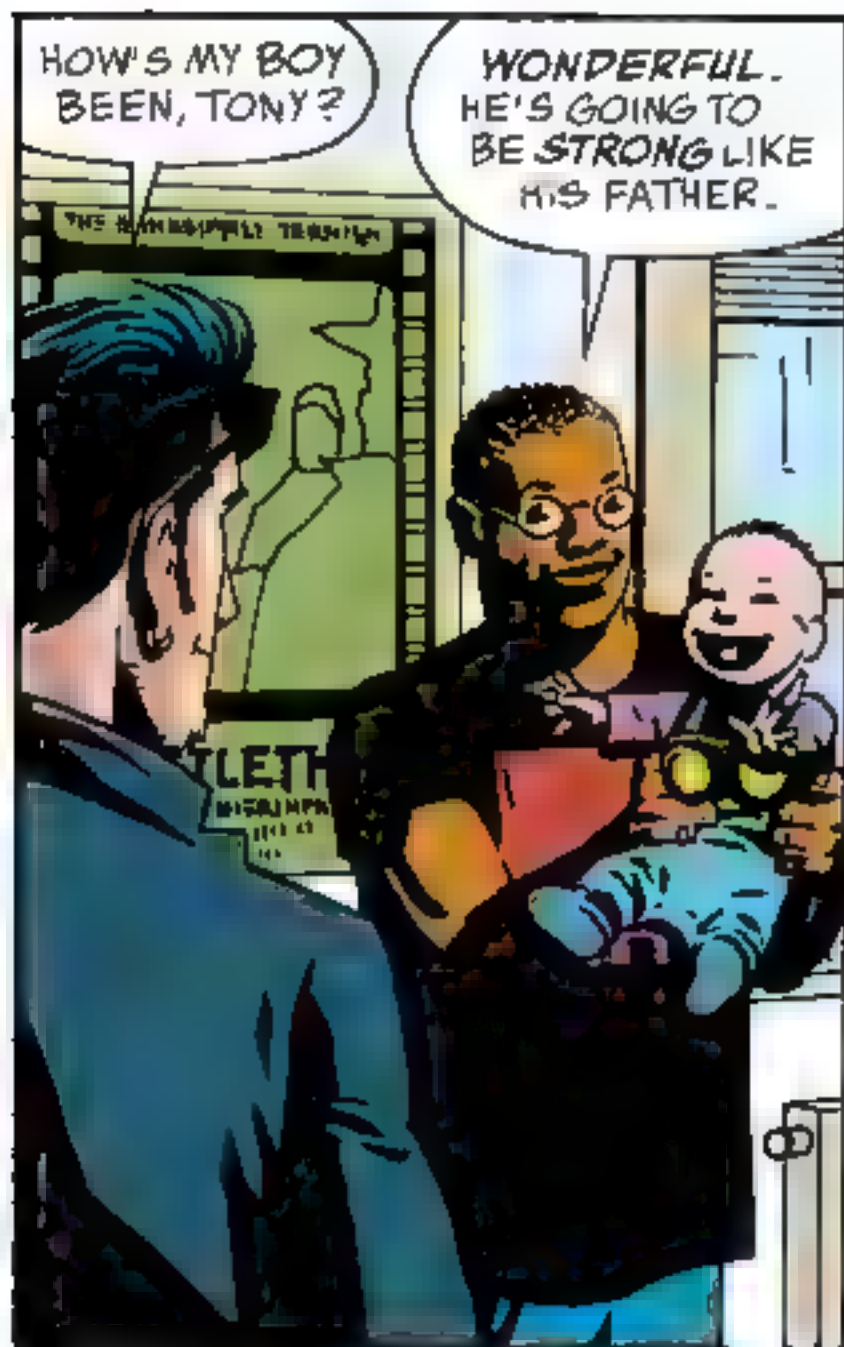






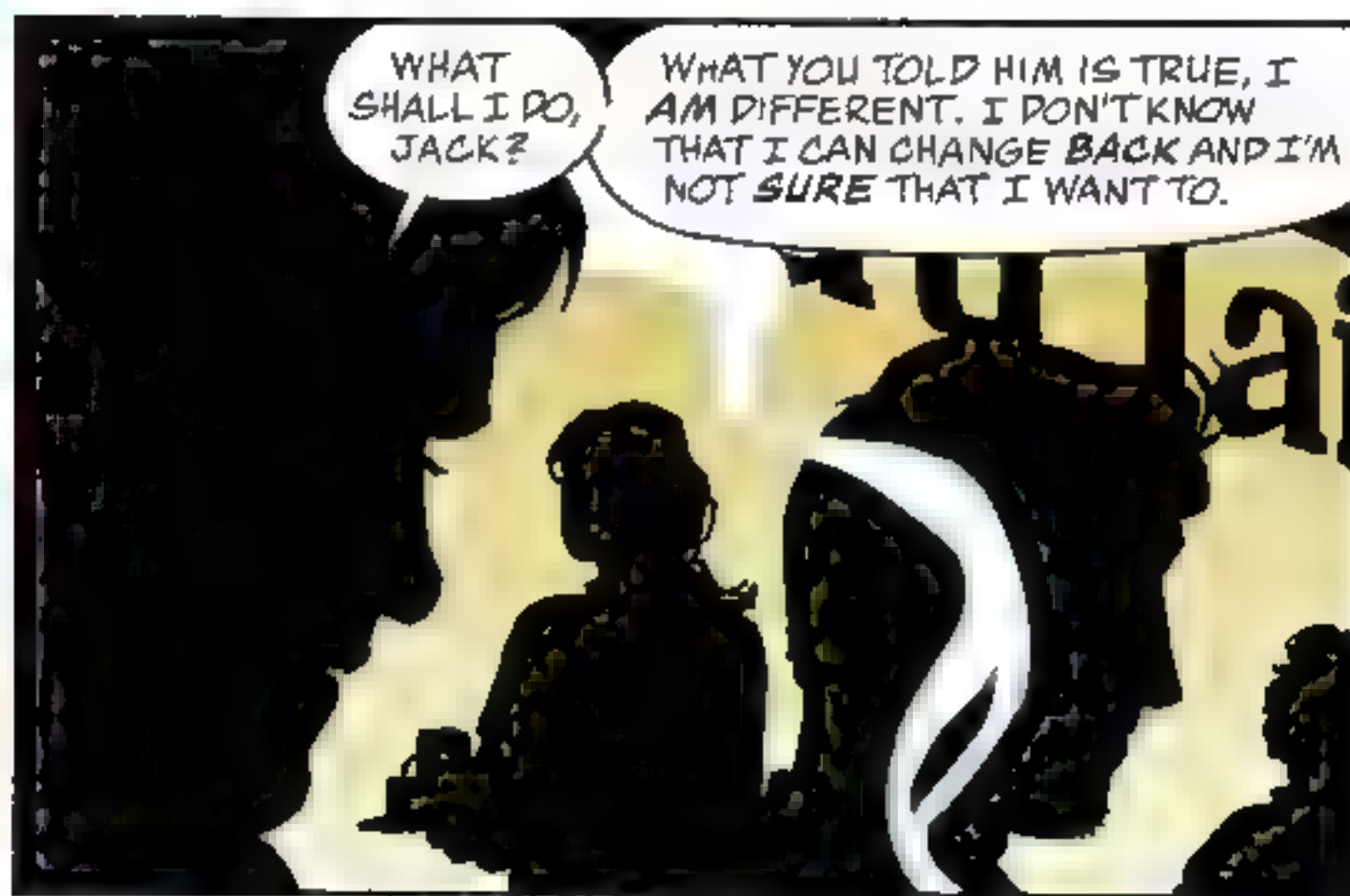








I'M TRYING. I CAN SEE HOW TONY FEELS.



WHAT SHALL I DO, JACK?

WHAT YOU TOLD HIM IS TRUE, I AM DIFFERENT. I DON'T KNOW THAT I CAN CHANGE BACK AND I'M NOT SURE THAT I WANT TO.



THE MAN YOU'VE BECOME SAVED MY LIFE. YOU KEPT ME ALIVE.

I RECALL WE KEPT EACH OTHER ALIVE WHEN THE NEED AROSE

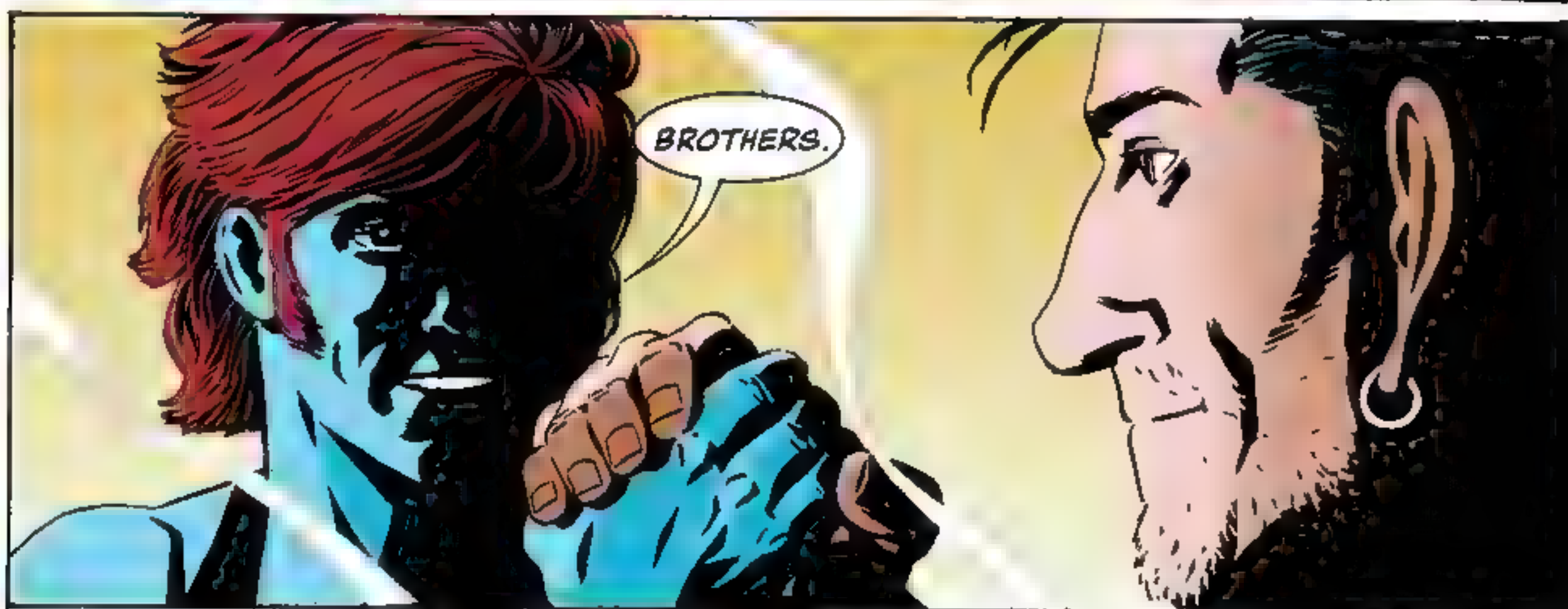


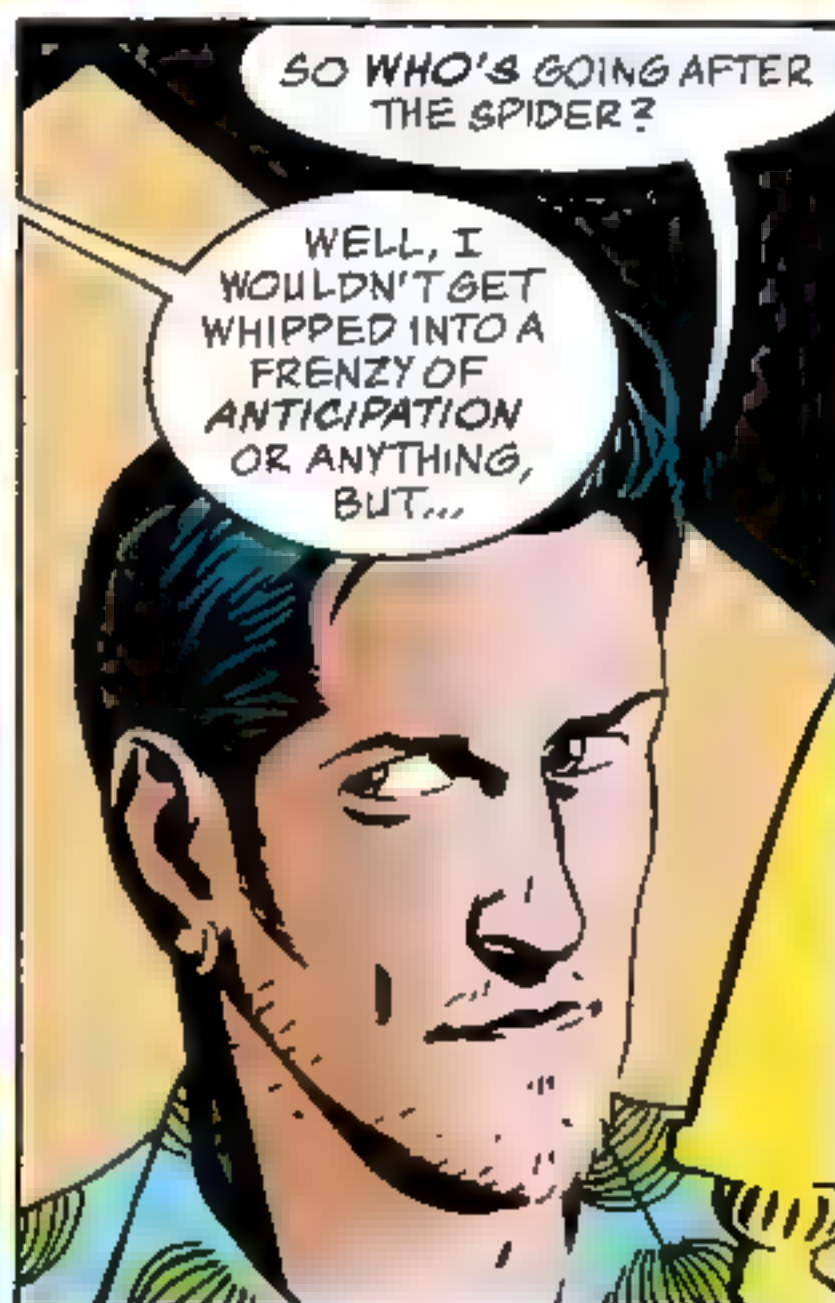
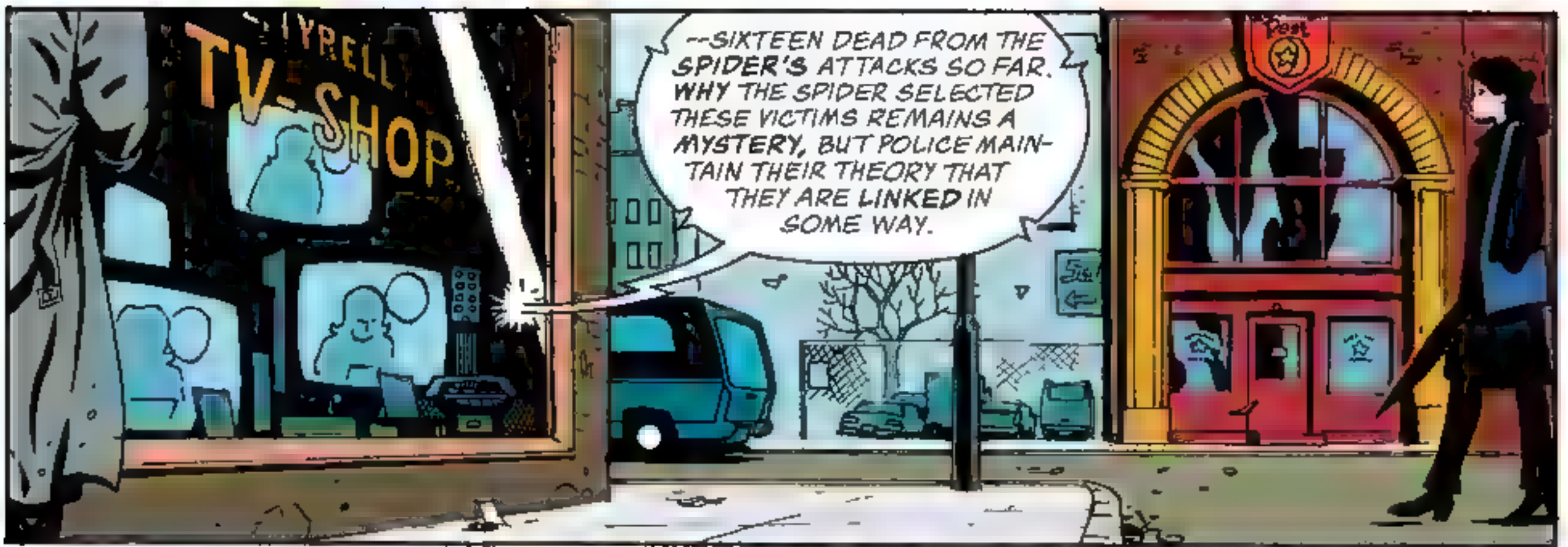
LOOK, ALL YOU CAN BE IS ALL YOU CAN BE.

TONY AND YOU WILL WORK IT OUT



OR WE WON'T.









...THIS IS MY HOME.



I NEVER KNEW. ON PEPPER LANE.

PAPER.

Huh?



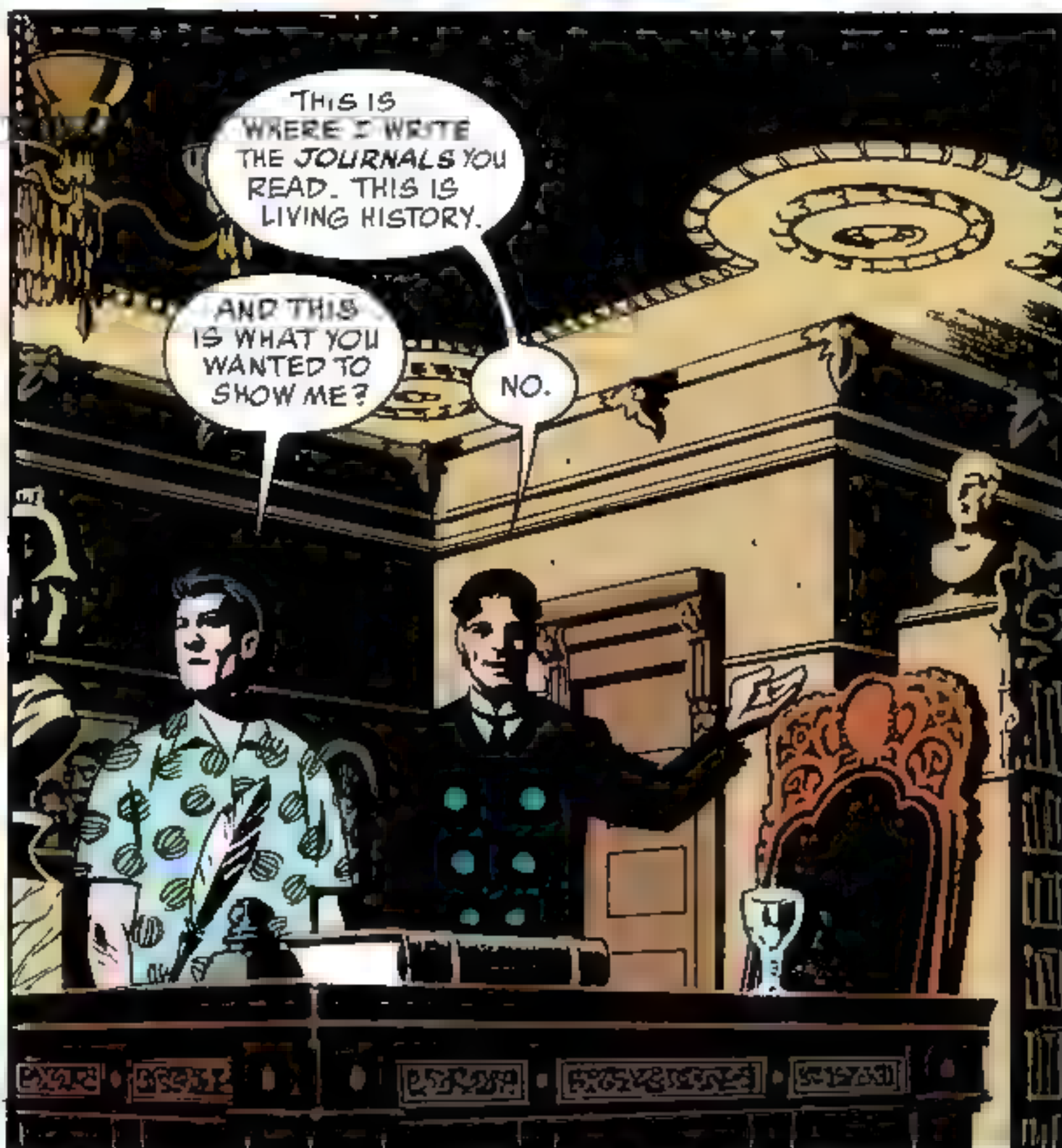
WHEN I SETTLED HERE IT WAS CALLED RUE DU PAPIER, FROM THE OLD MCGARRY PRINTING PLANT THAT STOOD AT THE FAR END FOR SO LONG.

PEPPER WAS AN ANGLICIZATION OF THE FRENCH



WHY ARE YOU SHOWING ME THIS?

BECAUSE IT'S TIME I DID.



THIS IS WHERE I WRITE THE JOURNALS YOU READ. THIS IS LIVING HISTORY.

AND THIS IS WHAT YOU WANTED TO SHOW ME?

NO.



STEP THROUGH. LET ME REVEAL MY SECRET PASSION.

Err... DO I WANT TO KNOW?

OF COURSE...



...EVERYONE
LIKES ROSES.

I ASSISTED JASON MAYVILLE
IN 1882. MAYVILLE WHO WOULD
ONE DAY MURDER BRIAN
SAVAGE.

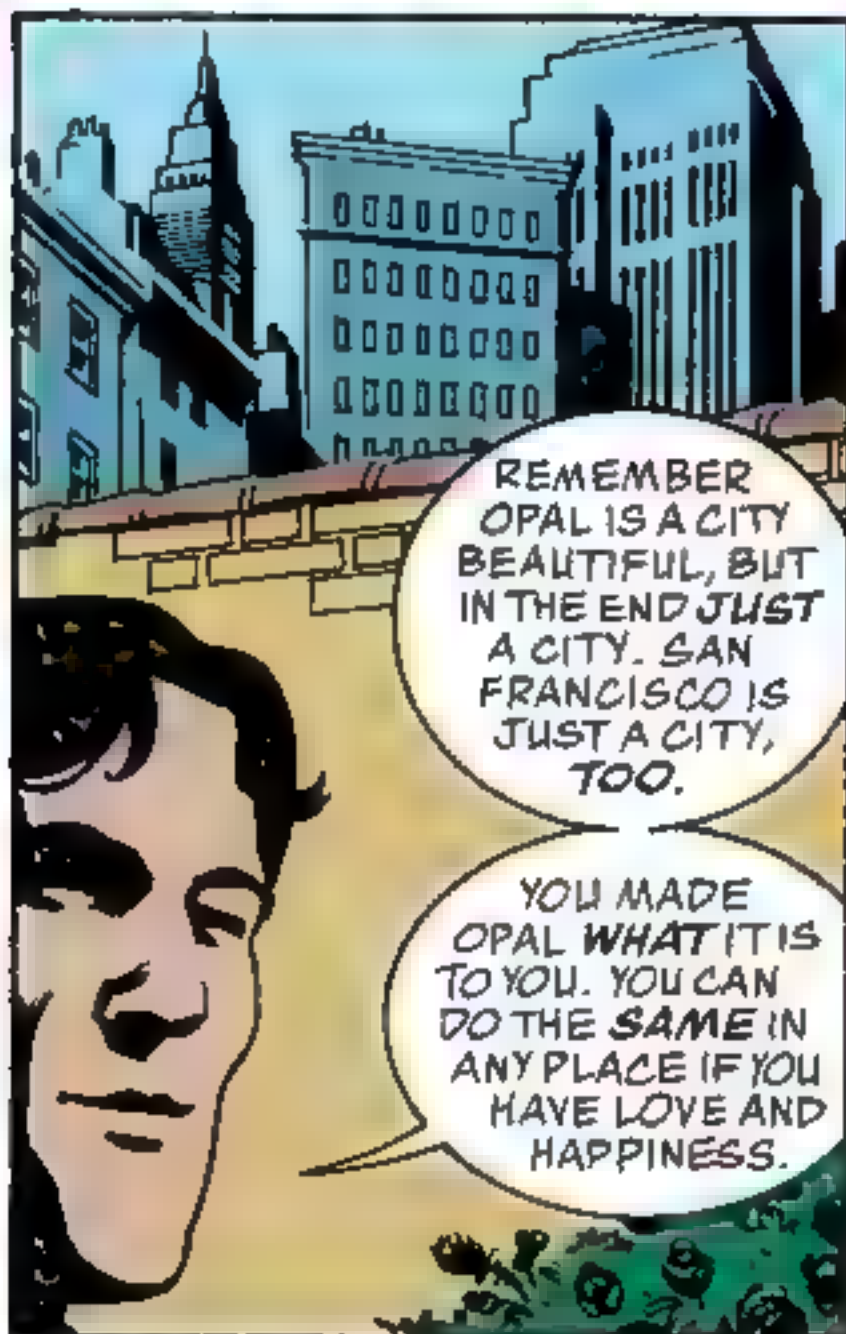
IN RETURN FOR MY
ASSISTANCE IN '82
I ASKED FOR THIS
LAND.

WHY?

ROSES WERE THE PASSION
OF MAYVILLE'S DEAD FATHER.
SO MUCH A PASSION
MAYVILLE SR. BRED OPAL'S
FIRST INDIGENOUS ROSE.
HERE. THIS IS MAYVILLE SR.'S
GARDEN.

DO YOU SEE THE SHAPE? THE
FLARE OF THE PETALS? SMELL ITS
AROMA. AND THE DARK BLUE HUE
LIKE AN OPAL NIGHT SKY.

THESE BUSHES ARE OPAL'S
NATIVES BORN AND BRED. TAKE
THIS AND OPAL GOES WITH YOU
WHEREVER YOU ARE.



REMEMBER
OPAL IS A CITY
BEAUTIFUL, BUT
IN THE END JUST
A CITY. SAN
FRANCISCO IS
JUST A CITY,
TOO.

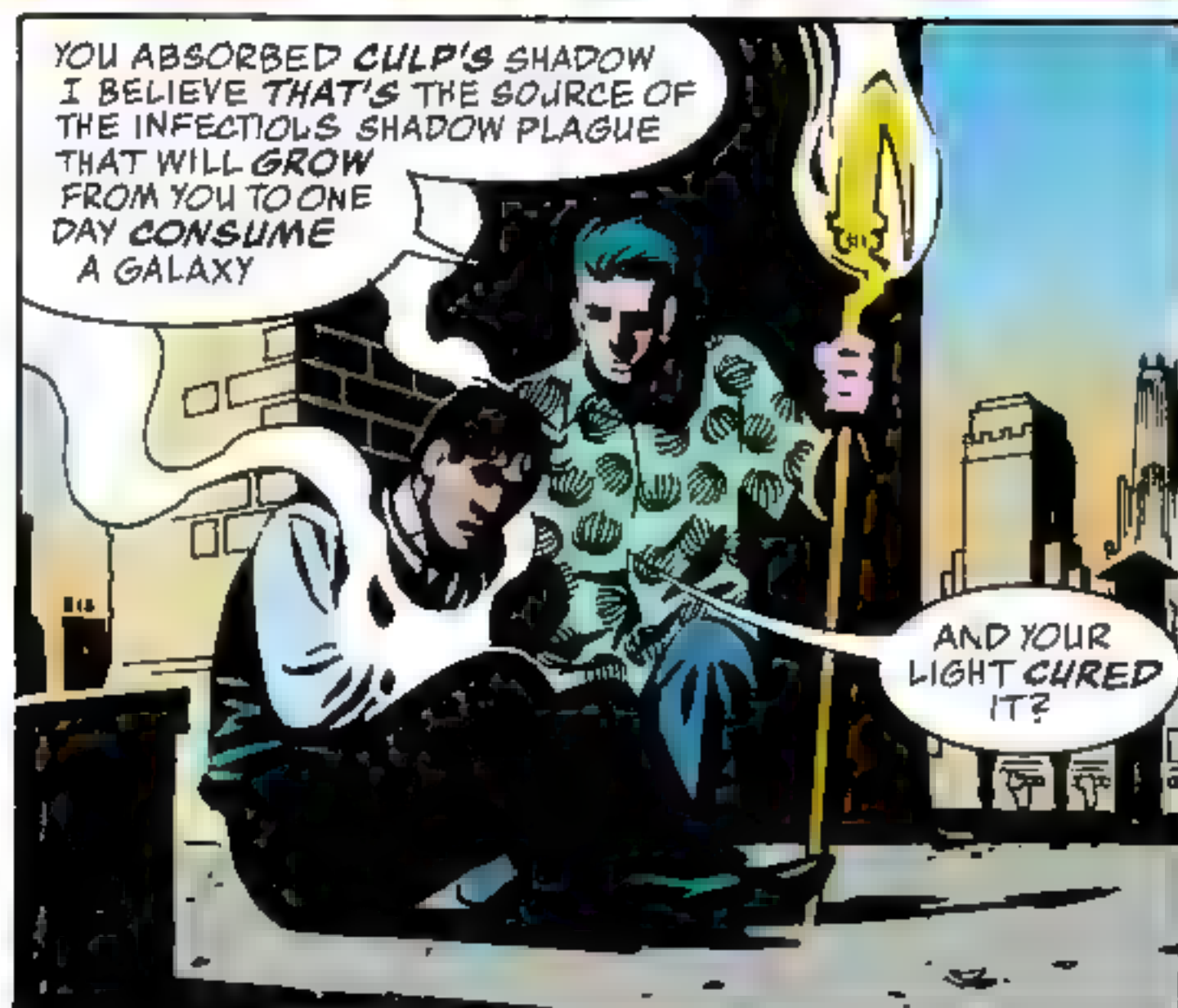
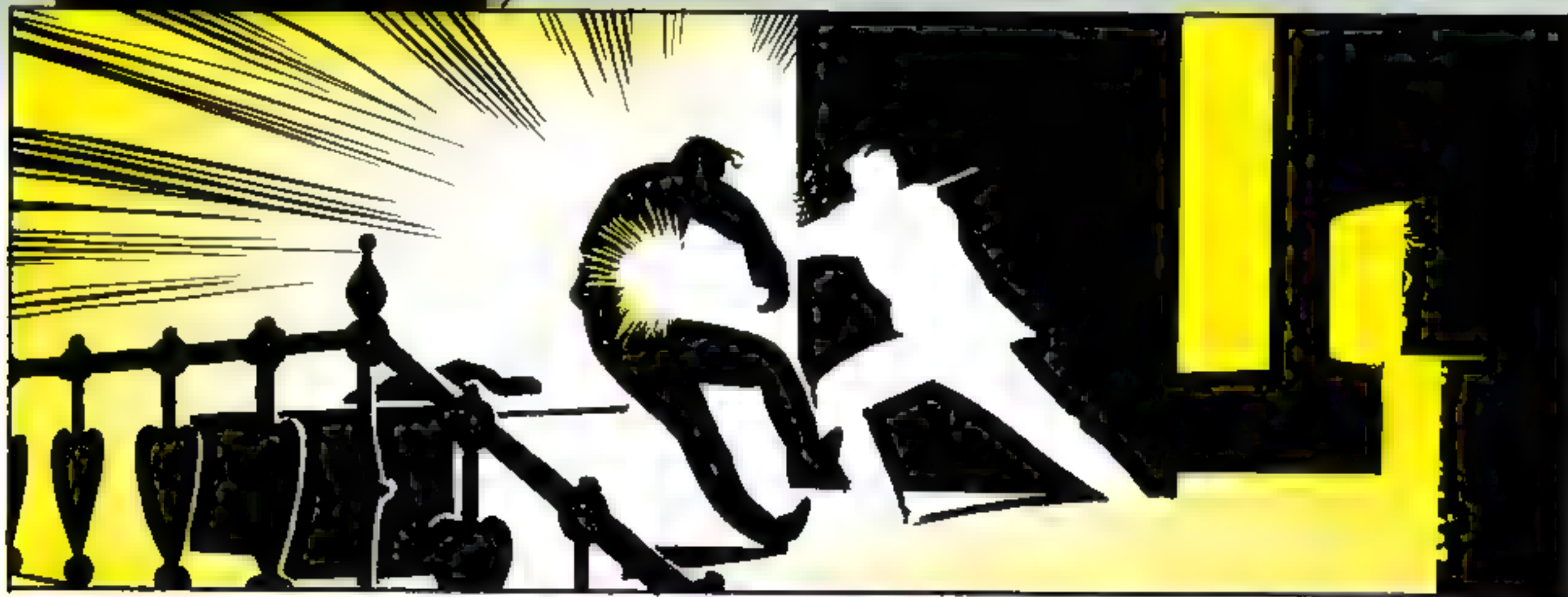
YOU MADE
OPAL WHAT IT IS
TO YOU. YOU CAN
DO THE SAME IN
ANY PLACE IF YOU
HAVE LOVE AND
HAPPINESS.

I'M AMAZED TO
HEAR YOU SAY ALL
THIS, SHADE.

FRANKLY,
SO AM I.

BUT IN THE
END A ROSE IS
A ROSE IS A
ROSE









"...I DIDN'T LIKE HER MUCH WHEN I FIRST MET HER."

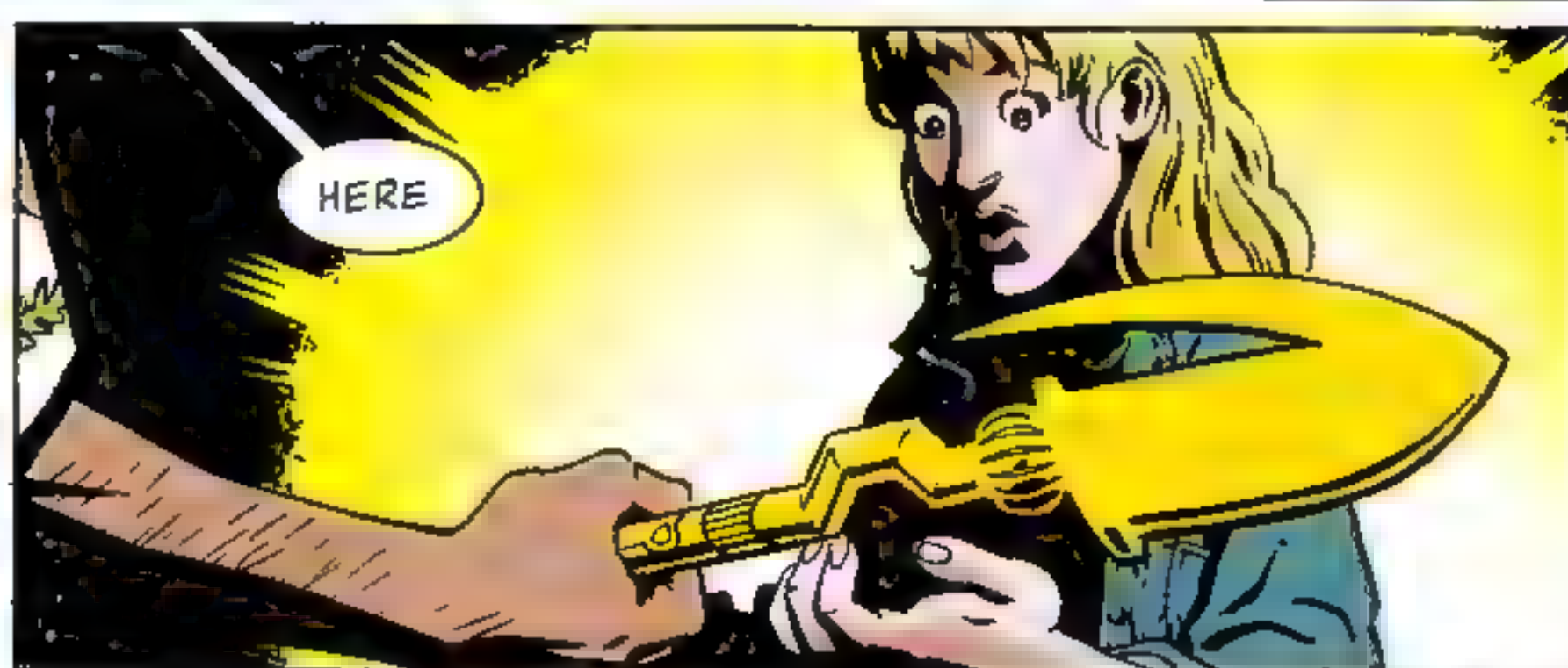
HI, COURTNEY

JACK!
WHAT'S UP?
WHY DID YOU
CALL ME
TO OPAL?



I HAVE
SOMETHING
FOR YOU.

A WEDGIE?



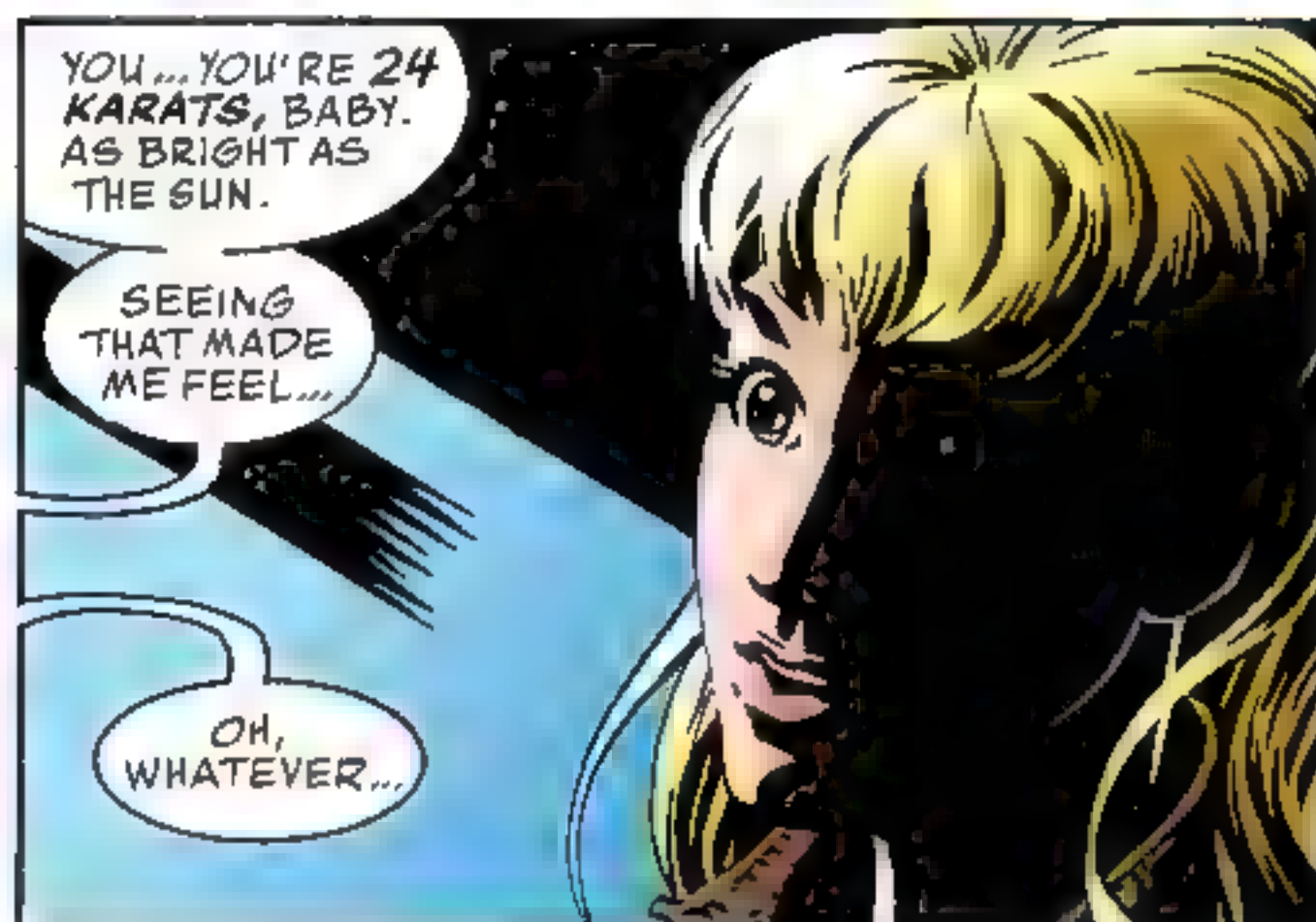
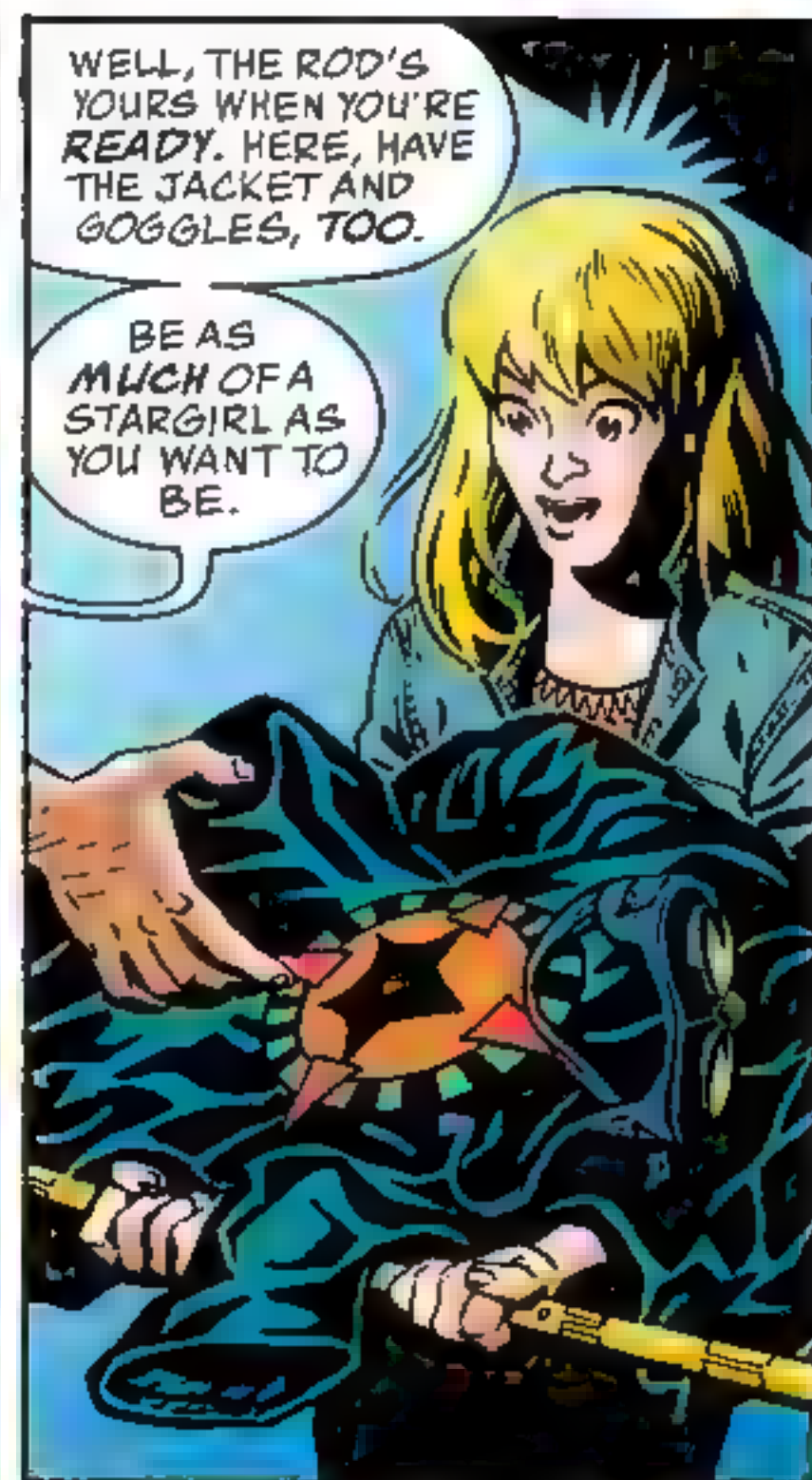
HERE



THIS IS...
THIS IS--

COURTNEY,
I HAVE A GOOD
IDEA WHAT IT IS BY
NOW. THE
IMPORTANT THING
IS IT'S YOURS.

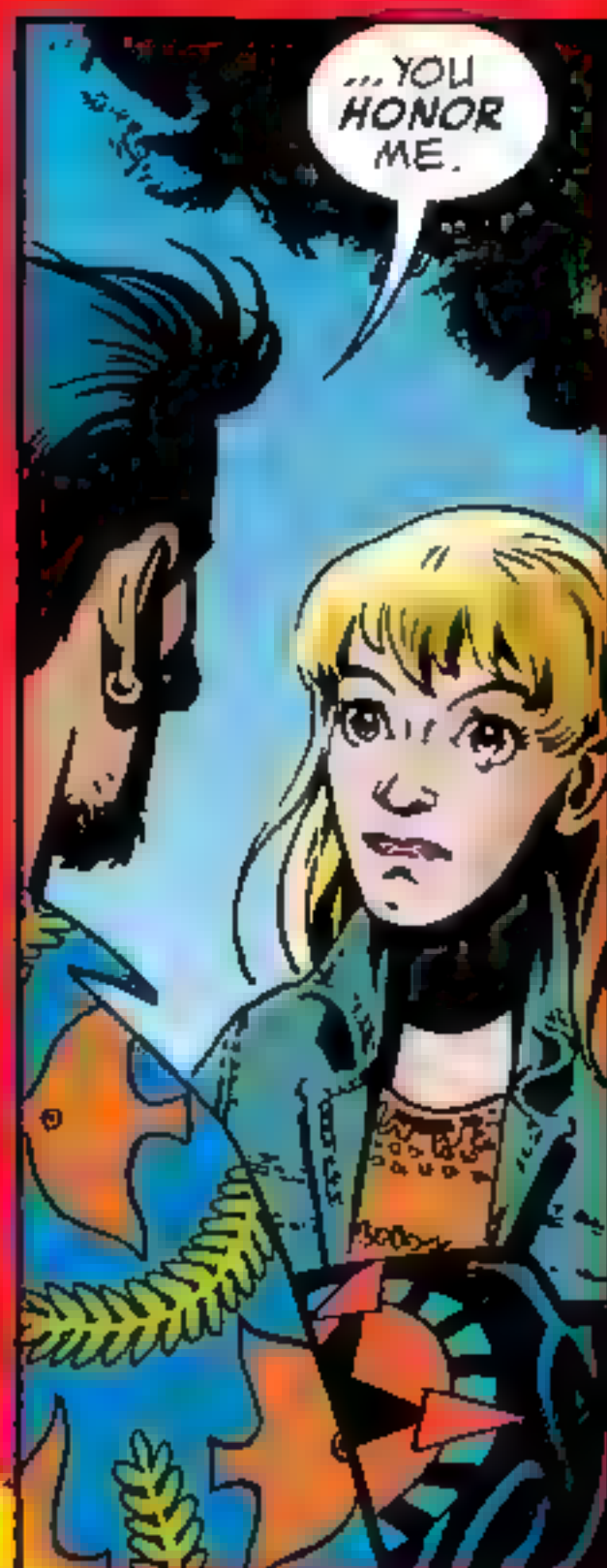
I DON'T
UNDERSTAND



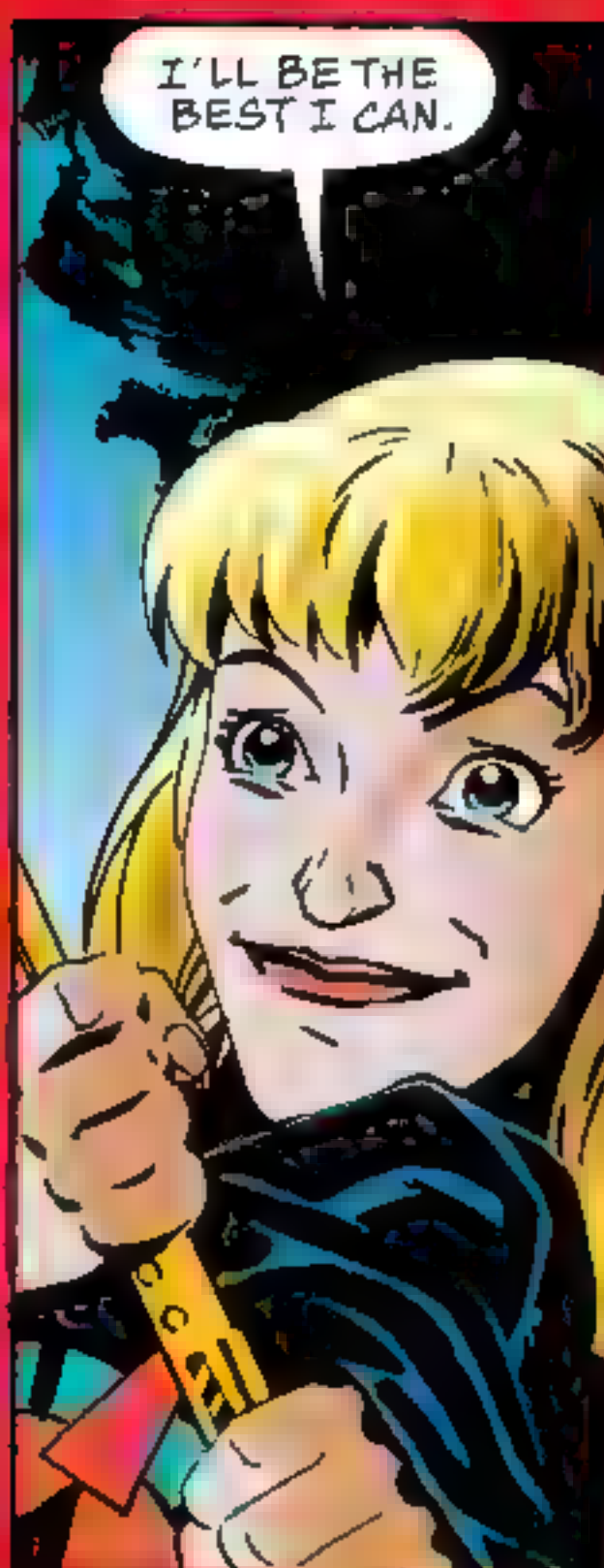


... WHATEVER
I MAY HAVE
THOUGHT OF YOU,
I'VE HAD TIME
TO RECONSIDER
THE MATTER.

COURTNEY,
IF YOU ACCEPT
THIS...



... YOU
HONOR
ME.



I'LL BE THE
BEST I CAN.



I SEE A FLASH OF...

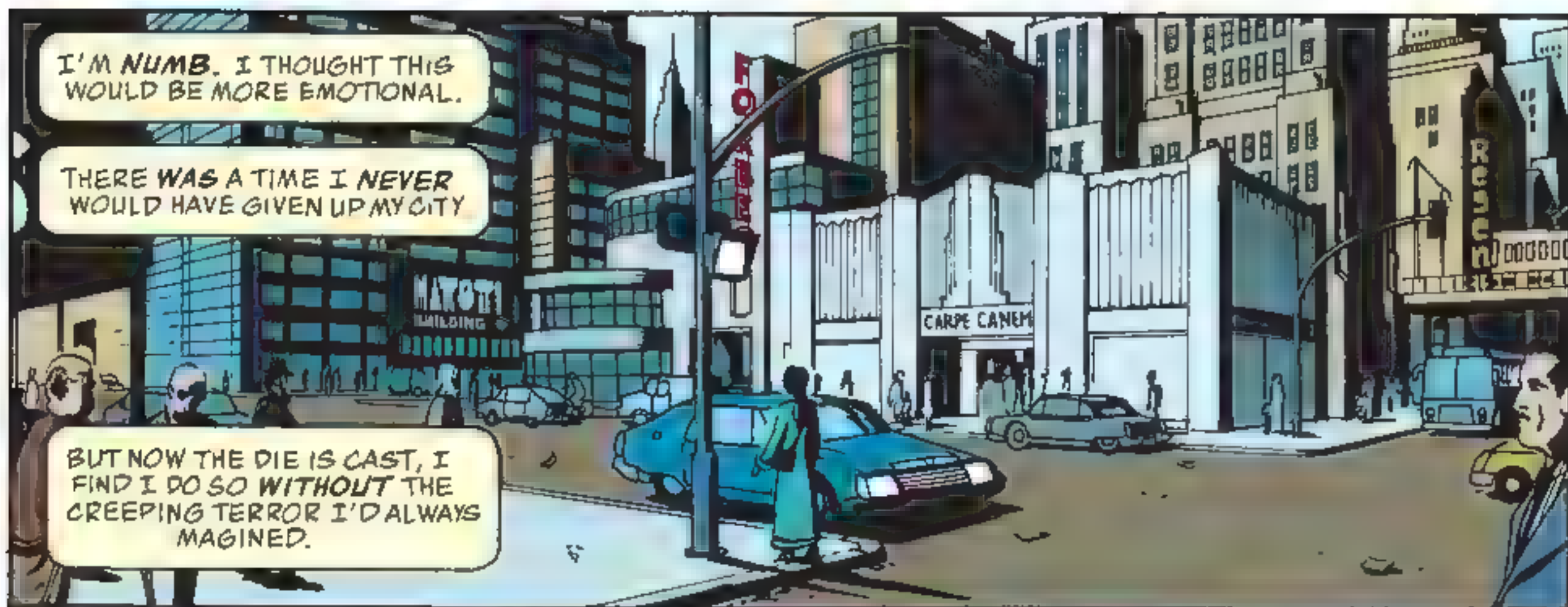
... I DON'T KNOW,
I'M NOT PSYCHIC
LIKE CHARITY... BUT...

...THIS DAY I AM
A SEER OF SORTS.

I SEE COURTNEY.
SOMEDAY. ONE DAY

SHE'LL BE MAGNIFICENT.





I'M *NUMB*. I THOUGHT THIS WOULD BE MORE EMOTIONAL.

THERE WAS A TIME I *NEVER* WOULD HAVE GIVEN UP MY CITY

BUT NOW THE DIE IS CAST, I FIND I DO SO *WITHOUT* THE CREEPING TERROR I'D ALWAYS MAGINED.



SADIE. I'M GOING TO BE WITH SADIE. I'M GOING TO BE A FATHER ALL OVER AGAIN.

AND SUDDENLY THE CITY'S SPRES, WHILE *BEAUTIFUL*...

...ARE ONLY THAT.



I LOOK AROUND THE STORE. OLD THINGS. BEAUTIFUL OLD THINGS

EACH PIECE I PASS KISSES MY CHEEK OR STROKES MY ARM AS WE PART. HANDSHAKES AND FAREWELLS OF BAKELITE AND RAYON AND FRANCISCAN POTTERY.

BUT THEN...



...LIGHT FALLS UPON A FIESTA-WARE BOWL, A MATT MASON FIGURE AND A HOPALONG LUNCHBOX THAT I'D CLUMPED TOGETHER.

IT'S A *STILL LIFE*.

I *PAINT* WHAT I SEE.

USING A SET OF OILS I'D LONG THOUGHT LOST



AND THEN AND THERE...

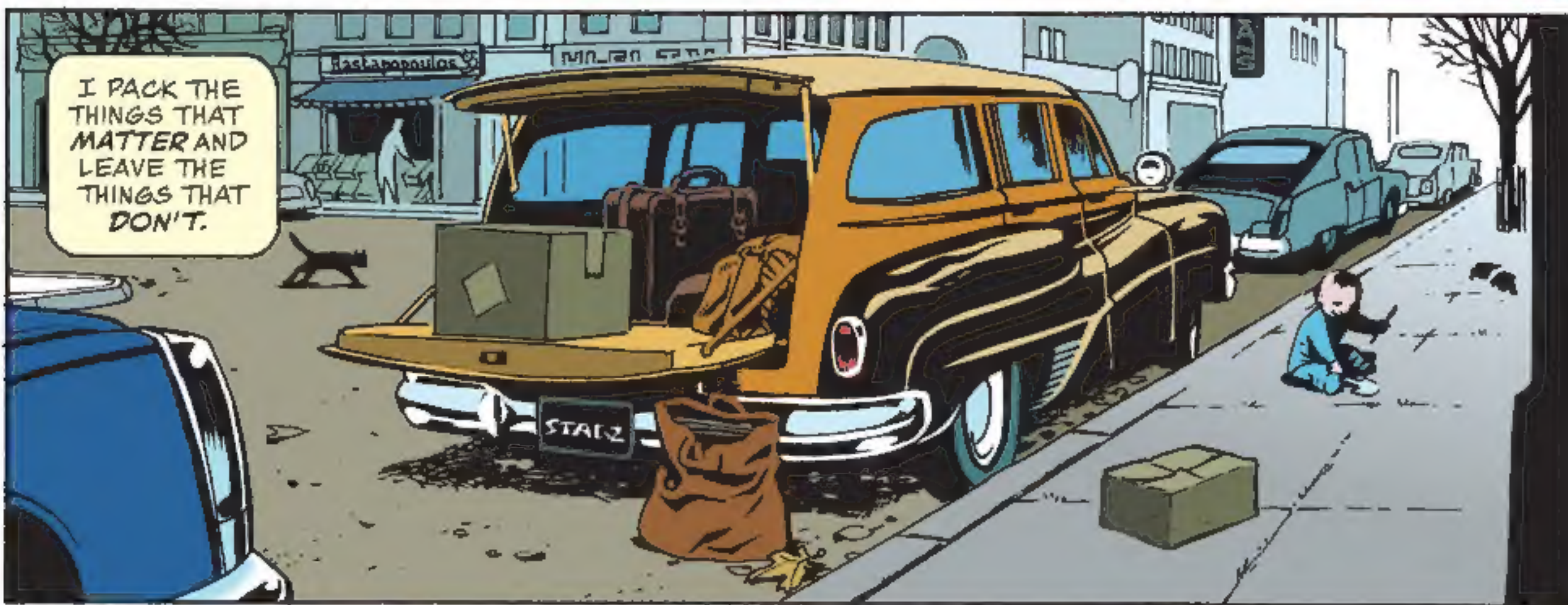
... I RESOLVE TO BE A PAINTER ONCE AGAIN.

THEN AND THERE, ART. MY NEW LIFE.

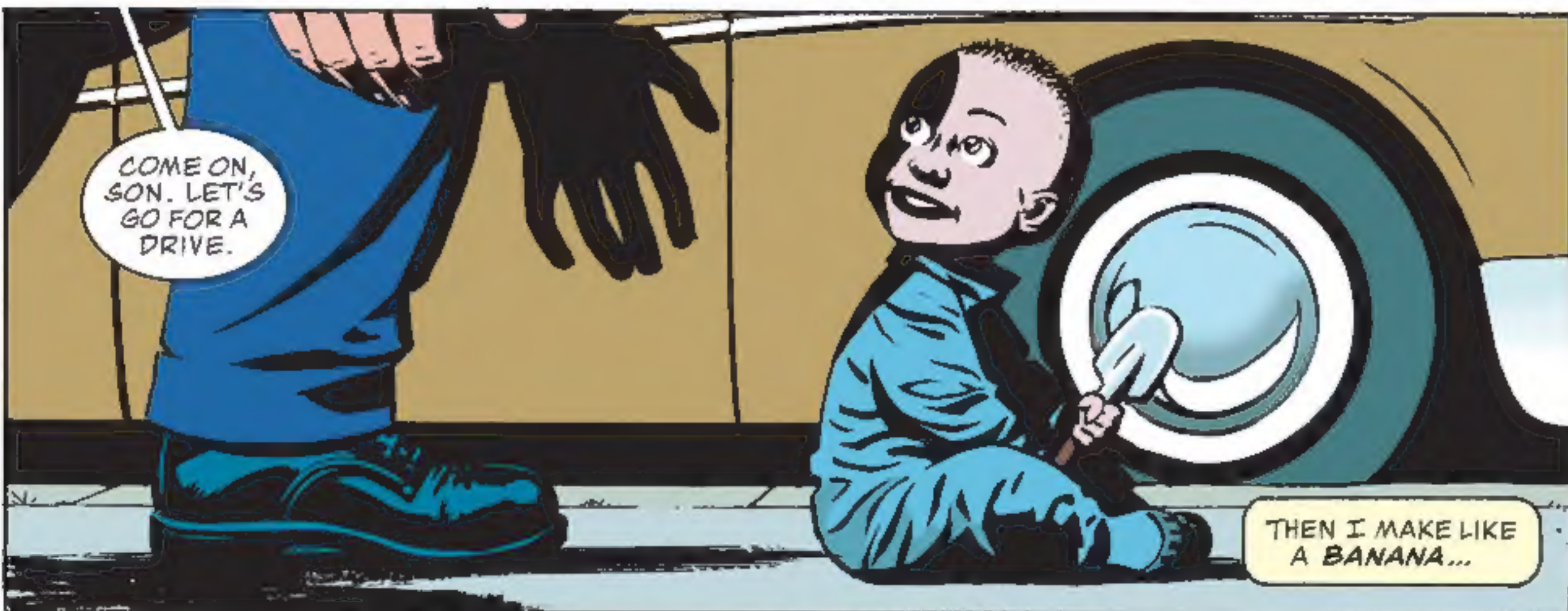


I TAKE MY BOY TO SEE HIS GRANDFATHER ONE LAST TIME.

AND ALL THOSE WHO BORE THE NAME BETWEEN MY FATHER AND ME.



I PACK THE THINGS THAT MATTER AND LEAVE THE THINGS THAT DON'T.



COME ON, SON. LET'S GO FOR A DRIVE.

THEN I MAKE LIKE A BANANA...

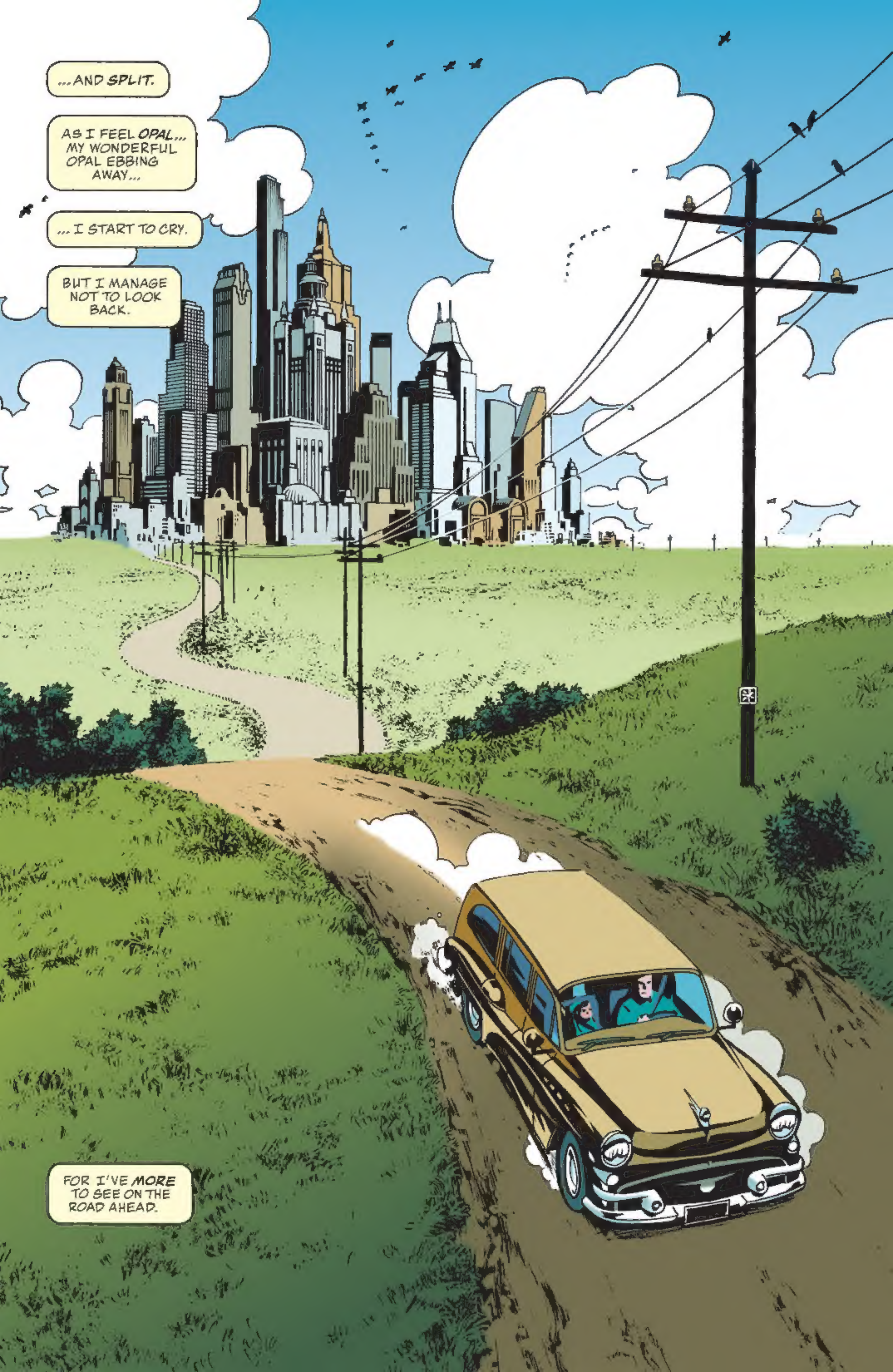
...AND SPLIT.

AS I FEEL OPAL...
MY WONDERFUL
OPAL EBBING
AWAY...

... I START TO CRY.

BUT I MANAGE
NOT TO LOOK
BACK.

FOR I'VE MORE
TO SEE ON THE
ROAD AHEAD.



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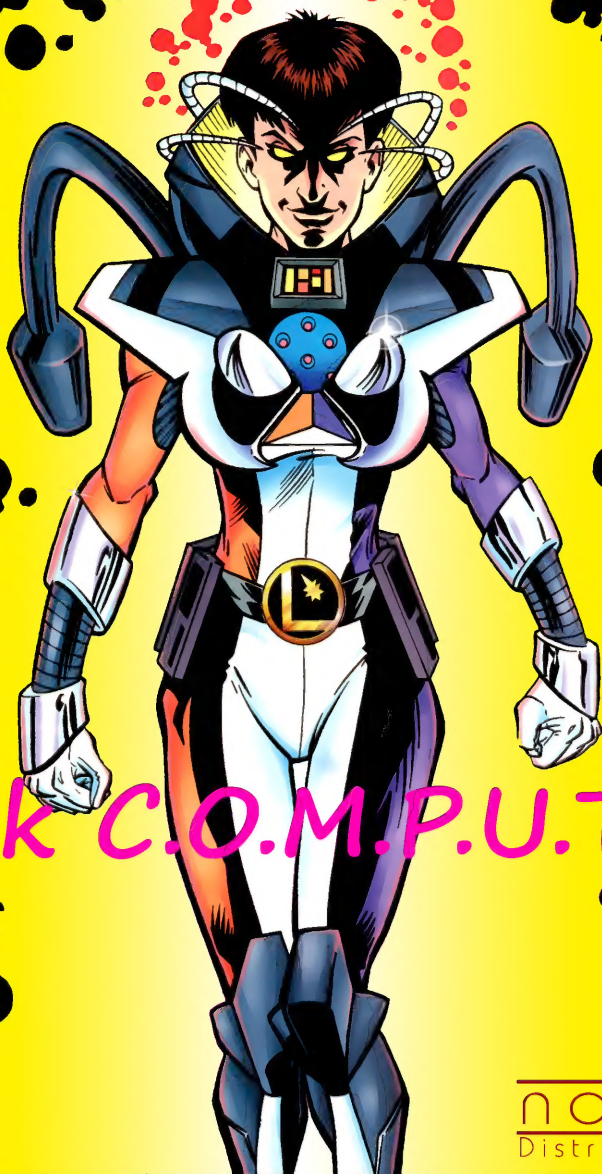
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